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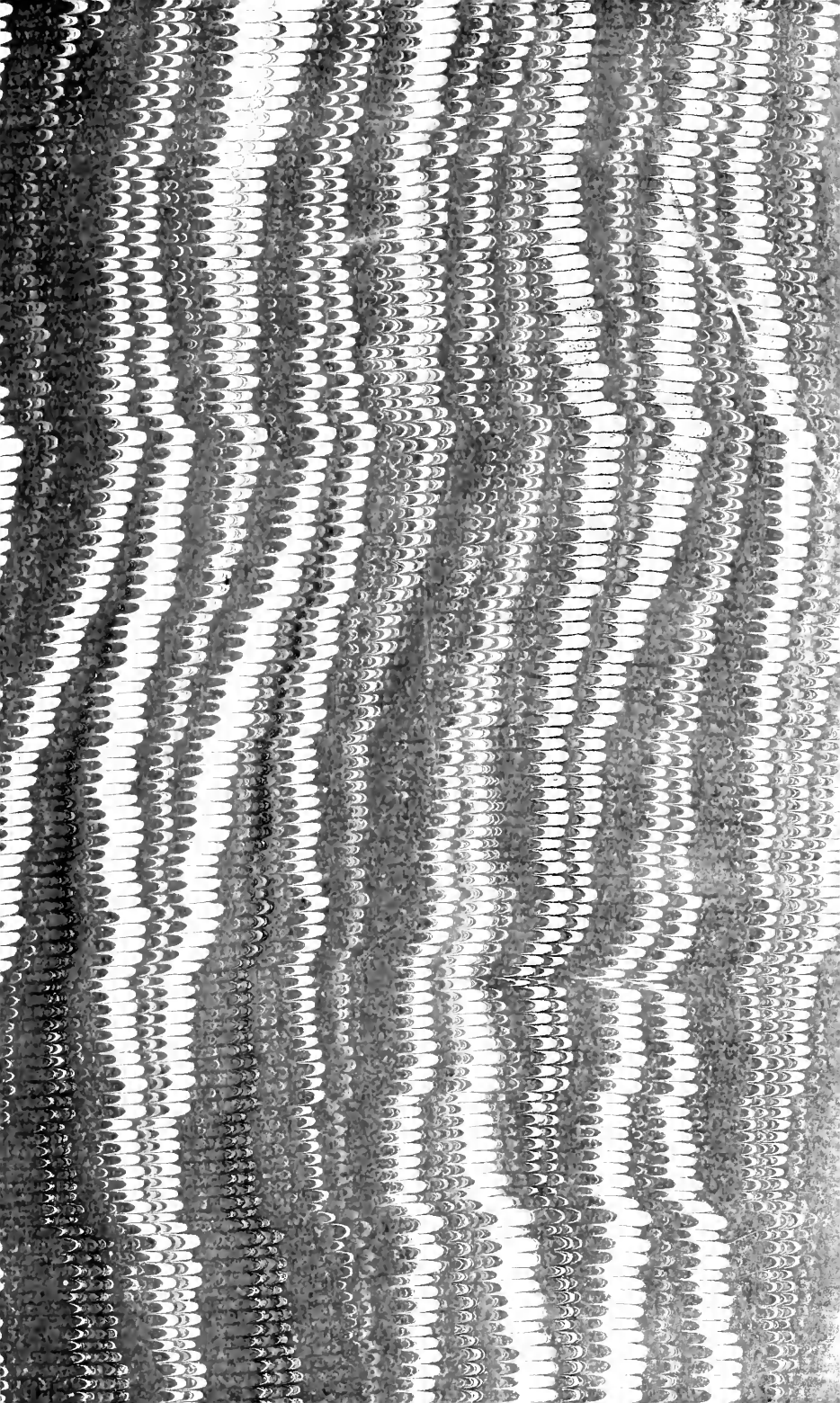
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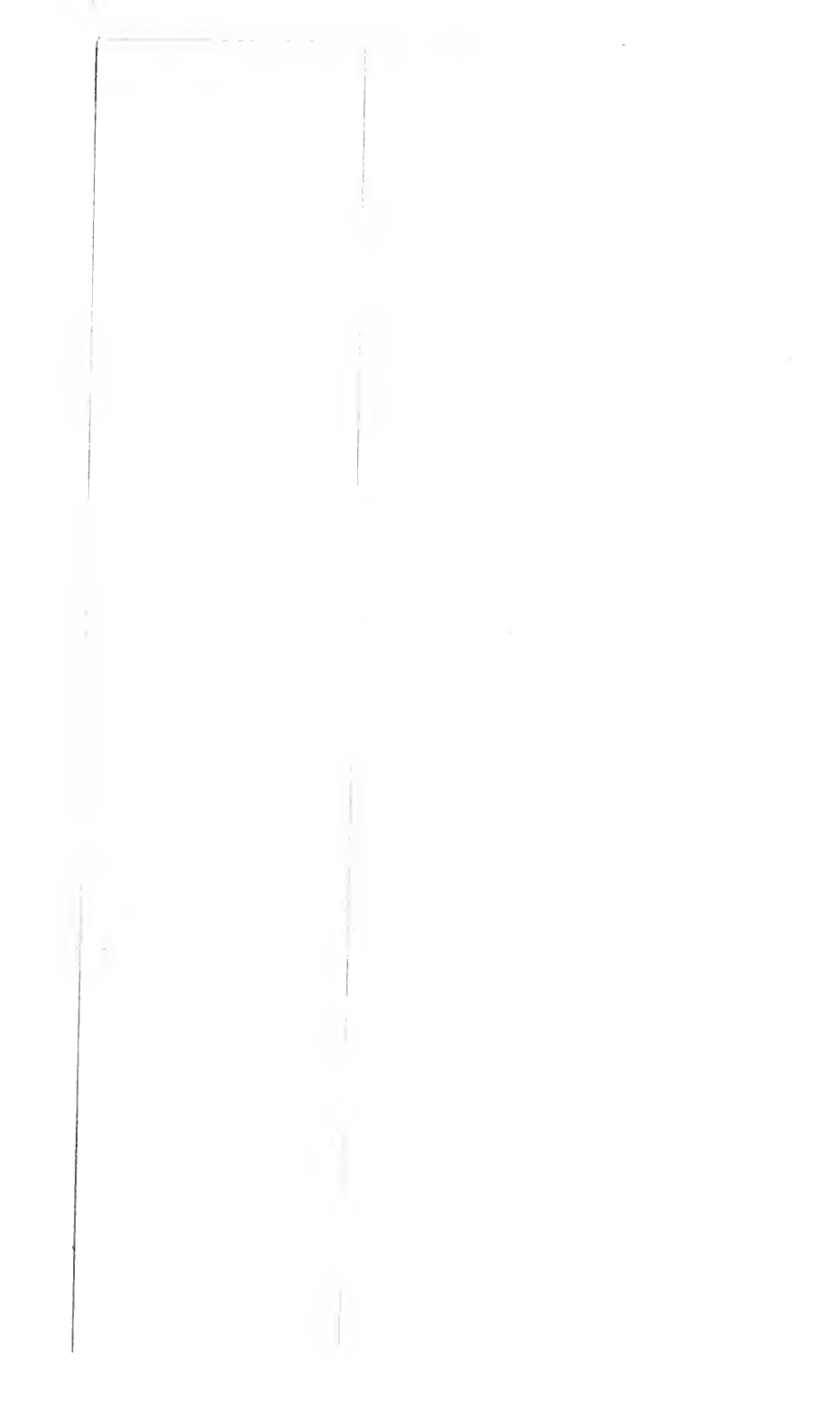
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INTERESTING  
**ROMAN ANTIQUITIES**

RECENTLY  
DISCOVERED IN FIFE.

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INTERESTING  
ROMAN ANTIQUITIES

RECENTLY

*DISCOVERED IN FIFE,*

ASCERTAINING THE SITE OF THE GREAT BATTLE  
FOUGHT BETWIXT

AGRICOLA AND GALGACUS;

WITH THE DISCOVERY OF THE POSITION OF FIVE ROMAN  
TOWNS, AND OF THE SITE AND NAMES OF UPWARDS  
OF SEVENTY ROMAN FORTS :

ALSO

OBSERVATIONS

REGARDING THE

*Ancient Palaces of the Pictish Kings*

IN THE

TOWN OF ABERNETHY,

*AND OTHER LOCAL ANTIQUITIES.*

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BY THE REV. ANDREW SMALL, EDENSHEAD.

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EDINBURGH:

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1823.



TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
**LORD GRAY,**  
PRESIDENT OF THE  
SOCIETY OF SCOTISH ANTIQUARIES,  
THIS HUMBLE BUT SINCERE ATTEMPT  
TO RESCUE FROM OBLIVION  
THE INTERESTING ANTIQUITIES  
DESCRIBED IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES,  
IS,  
WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT,  
INSCRIBED  
BY HIS LORDSHIP'S HUMBLE SERVANT,  
**THE AUTHOR.**

1835





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about them ; and, though I waited some time for some other person, more able than I in my present state of health, to introduce them to the public, yet I waited in vain. With the view, therefore, of rescuing these antiquities from utter oblivion, and introducing them to public notice—especially those connected with the great battle, unquestionably Roman, which was fought in my neighbourhood—I had made particular inquiry about every circumstance respecting it, and had drawn up an account of the battle itself, and other circumstances more immediately connected with it, before I had an opportunity of seeing Tacitus's account of it. After having perused his work, I am still farther confirmed in my opinion, that the view I had taken of this subject was correct ; and that the place I had fixed upon was really the site of the battle fought between Galgacus the Caledonian king and general, and Agricola the Roman general, which Tacitus describes ; though it is obvious to demonstration, that he had mistaken the Lomond Hill for Mount Grampius, as will be shewn in the sequel. Every other particular respecting the battle agrees with Tacitus's account of it, excepting the various movements or evolutions that had taken place during the engagement, which he seems afraid to introduce, lest they should be the means of detecting the cunning, artifice, and stratagem, the Romans had betaken themselves to, in order to entice the Caledonians from their favourable

position; especially as they were loudly accused by the brave Caledonians of resorting to these practices to insure success. Tacitus describes the battle as if it had been decided all in one particular spot, though it is perfectly obvious that it had been fought in four different places, as is evident by the burning of the dead in all those several places.

By the discovery of the Roman town Orea, &c. and the other antiquities connected with it, I was obliged to alter and enlarge my plan; and, being previously somewhat acquainted with the line of Agricola's march through Scotland, with the camps, forts, &c. which he built, I resolved to introduce these also to public notice, (which has never been hitherto done, so far as I know,) and to trace him in all his seven campaigns, till he fought the great battle of Meralsford or the Lomond Hill, when he was recalled soon after. For, if ever there was a battle fought by the Romans in Scotland, it was this; nay, there is not one of their battles half so well authenticated as this appears to be. Besides the burning of the dead in all the various places where the battle had raged, and the great cairns erected over them, and the four large Roman cairns within which all the evolutions and operations of the battle had taken place, and the many Roman urns found formerly and of late,—it is still something very remarkable that, within little more than the short space of one year, four or five different speci-

mens of Roman antiquities should have been discovered in all directions around the field of battle;—viz. five Roman bronze vessels on the north west, two Roman coins on the north, the Roman town the *Urbs Orea* of Tacitus and Ptolemy discovered on the south, about forty battle axes and other warlike implements of Roman antiquity of different kinds lying all together on the south west, as also two Roman *Dunipacis* or Hills of Peace erected after the battle, never taken notice of before, on the east. It would appear as if the Great Ruler and Superintendant of all events in Providence were now willing that the veil of ambiguity, by which this interesting battle, and the events connected with it which have been so long concealed in obscurity, should now be drawn aside; and that such substantial documents should be educed as to establish the truth of it for ever after, upon the most solid and permanent basis. I am not so sanguine, however, as to suppose that every one who may chance to read this work will be equally well convinced of what I have advanced, who may not have had the same opportunities of information; yet, under the fullest conviction of their being genuine, I am of opinion that these various and important discoveries in general can, without the least hesitation, be introduced into public observation, as I am fully convinced that they will stand the test of the most strict investigation. Instead, therefore, of shrinking from,



I rather solicit that strict and impartial investigation, particularly about the interesting battle of Meralsford and the Roman town Orea, so long as there are so many living witnesses to establish the truth of the various particulars taken notice of respecting them, in the following pages. It is therefore hoped, that the importance of the subjects treated of, and a sincere desire of rescuing them from utter oblivion, and recommending them to general notice, will sufficiently apologise for them, in the estimation of every candid reader, amidst all the imperfections and disadvantages attending them.



ACCOUNT  
OF  
ROMAN ANTIQUITIES.

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CHAP. I.

*Preliminary Observations.*

THE discovery that has lately been made in this part of the country is a most important one, indeed, in the era of antiquarianism, namely, the finding of a number of antique vessels of various descriptions and sizes, unquestionably of Roman antiquity; especially as it was the primary cause of stirring up that spirit of inquiry, the result of which appears in the following pages.

The manner of their being found was, by the plough coming accidentally upon the largest of them, and turning it up. This naturally excited curiosity, as well as expectation; and, by digging carefully around the place, the rest were found, amounting

to five in all, every one of them being bronze, the true Roman metal ; a more particular description of which will be afterwards given.

The finding of these, then, and the particular spot they were found in, tend greatly to elucidate many important events in that early stage of history about which we have been always much in the dark, and to confirm us in the truth of many remarkable events about which we have hitherto been in much doubt and uncertainty. It proves, beyond a doubt, that the Romans have been in this part of the country, and also serves as an index to their direct line of march through Fife towards Strathearn, and at the same time to point out and explain the various movements of both armies in fighting out a very bloody battle that took place in the immediate vicinity, which was by some conjectured to have been with the Danes, and by others with the Saxons, but now by this, and other discoveries lately made, clearly proved to have been betwixt the Caledonians and Romans ; and appears obviously to have been that great battle described by Tacitus as having been fought at the foot of Mount Grampius ; but it is clear, to a demonstration, that he had mistaken Mons Lomundus for Mons Grampius, as it is nigh the north base of the west Lomond Hill that the battle was fought. Also, the Grampian hills are well known to be a ridge of high mountains running nigh through the whole breadth of Scotland. Had the battle, then, taken place there, and he had written correctly about it, it

would have been at the foot of the Montes Grampii, in the plural number, and not like a detached hill as Mons Lomundus is, and would have required to be written in the singular number. Besides, it was a good number of years after this battle took place before Tacitus wrote the account of it; as he tells us himself that it was four years after the death of Agricola, his father-in-law, before he wrote the account of the skirmish or battle that took place the year previous to this at Loch Ore, wherein the 9th legion was nigh cut off; consequently, his information could not be so correct as if he had been an eye witness, or present in the engagement, but behoved to be derived from those who were present, or from the information they gave him, which seems at best to have been deficient and even partial. For though, in his account of that bold attack of the Caledonians, he affects to call it a victory, yet all the victory the Romans had to boast of, was by the seasonable bringing in of the rest of the legions by Agricola, which made the Caledonians retreat to the woods and marshes, and thereby prevented the legion attacked from being entirely cut off, which the Caledonians, as Tacitus himself informs us, “*non virtute, sed occasione et arte ducis rati,*”—rather imputed it to the art and conduct of their general in coming so suddenly to the relief of his men; so that either side parted “*irritatis utrinque animis,*”—mutually irritated against one another. Is it then in the least probable, or can

it be for a moment credited, that, when both sides parted thus mutually prepared for another brush, the Caledonians would ever allow the Romans to march through the most fertile, and by far the most populous of their territories, and even to cross two of the largest rivers of their kingdom, before they attempted to measure their strength again with them? No! it is utterly incredible. But, to set the question forever at rest as to its being a Roman battle, besides the Roman vessels already alluded to,—the vast number of Roman urns found,—the burning of the dead in the various places where the battle raged, which are known to have been only practised by the Romans, while in this country,—the foundations of a Roman town have been discovered in the immediate vicinity of the field of battle, and also Roman coins of the then reigning Emperor Domitian ;—all which prove in the most incontestible manner what is contended for. Each of these will be more particularly described in their respective places. It is universally agreed that it was Julius Agricola, a brave and prudent commander, who was acting for Domitian as his lieutenant-general at this time in Britain, and that he commanded the Romans in this battle ; but, before attempting a more particular description of it here, let us advert a little to his military achievements previous to this, and endeavour to trace his line of march from his entering into North Britain, by the vestiges of it that he has left behind him, and the various antiquities connected

with it. His immediate predecessors were Petilius Cerialis and Julius Frontinus, both excellent generals. The former of these first broke the force of the Brigantes, a brave and warlike people, who inhabited the counties of Durham, Lancashire, Westmoreland, and Cumberland, the last of which the Cumbri afterwards inhabited, from whence it derived its name; and, after many severe and bloody encounters, they were finally subdued. His successor, Julius Frontinus, subdued the Silures, who are said to have been also a brave race of people, and for a considerable time withstood the power of the Roman arms. They inhabited the eastern part of South Wales, including Brecknockshire and Monmouthshire, on the banks of the river Severn; as also Hereford, Radnor, and Shropshires, to the northward. It was reserved for Julius Agricola, who was sent over by the Emperor Vespasian, to subdue the Ordovices, a hardy, brave, and warlike people, who inhabited North Wales, including Montgomery, Merioneth, Carnarvon, Denbigh, and Flint-shires, as also the Isle of Anglesea. These people are said to have made the greatest opposition to the Roman arms, and to have been the last in being brought under their subjection in all South Britain.

From the Isle of Anglesea, he is said to have crossed over to the Isle of Man, which lies contiguous; and, after subduing the Manks, and settling matters there, to have crossed over to the south end of Lower Galloway, where we have evident

vestiges that he had been there. He seems to have landed either at the Isle of Whithorn, or westward at the Bay of Glenluce, as there is one of his camps to be seen about three miles north west from the town of Whithorn.

This town would no doubt be existing even at that early period, as it is said to be very ancient, and was originally called *Candida Casa*, which name it obviously had received from the Romans at the time, perhaps from the white shining tents or huts of the soldiers erected about it, as the words *Candida Casa* signify, in opposition perhaps to *Casæ Nigræ*, a city so called on account of its black tents, situated in Africa, within the Roman dominions.

The town retained this name for the space of several hundred years, even long after the foundation of the Monastery that was built here some time in the fifth century, being one of the earliest after the introduction of Christianity. Though still retaining the name of *White*, the *Casa* had afterwards been altered into that of *Horn*, perhaps from the manner in which the town had been built, being long and narrow, with a bend in it, something resembling the form of a horn, and, joining these two together, making it Whithorn. Or rather, as the name of the town was anciently spelled Whiteharn, with greater probability it may have taken the name from that white coarse cloth which still retains the name of Harn, and with which the tents may have been covered.



The name of said cloth is obviously of great antiquity, and was used to be promised to servants when feeing or engaging them to service. From time immemorial, till after the middle of last century, so many ells or yards of harn were promised them besides their wages, and given them by what was called bounty-cloth for coarse shirting, next to sackcloth. The venerable ruins of the Monastery are still standing ; and, close adjoining to them, is a remarkable subterraneous passage vaulted over, and leading a far way to the westward ; the mouth, or outlet of it, is as yet still unknown, though it is generally told in the place that, in order to make the experiment as to where it led, a dog was forced into it, and that he ran under ground the distance of about seven miles westward towards the Bay of Glenluce. At any rate, it must extend to a great distance, as the country is level for a long way in the direction of it ; and a very respectable man, who went with me to show it, told me that, when a boy at school, in a frolic, he went so far into it that he heard a water that runs about half a mile north of it making a noise over his head ; and then he began to be alarmed for his safety, and returned back.

The skeleton of a Urus was dug up, about thirty years ago, in a moss a little south from the town. Happening to remain one night at Keswick, in Cumberland, after seeing the famed lake of that name adjoining to it, I went, as strangers usually do, to view the famous museum, kept at that time by a

Mr Crosthwait ; and, among other curiosities shewn, was the forefront of the head of this Urus, or, as it was sometimes called, a White Scottish Bison, with the horns, or rather the slacks or flints upon which the horns grew, extending to betwixt three and four feet from the tip of the horns, and in thickness above the size of an ordinary man's leg. Mr Crosthwait told me that it was found nigh the Isle of Whithorn. Being necessarily obliged to come by way of this on my return to the north country, I made it my endeavour to inquire more particularly about this Urus ; and fortunately the very man I inquired at happened to be one of those who helped to dig it up. He told me the whole skeleton was found, enormously large in size, and in pretty good preservation ; that it was all carefully packed up and sent by sea to the museum at Keswick, to be landed at Whitehaven ; but it is supposed that the sailors, not thinking it worth their pains to carry a parcel of huge bones, had thrown them over board, as none but the head and horns ever arrived there. The camp previously mentioned, which is unquestionably Roman, and obviously one of Agricola's, I also went to see. It seems to be one of the largest size, and in as good preservation as any to be seen in the kingdom. I had not time to measure it, but I think the people told me that it included three acres, but whether exclusive of the fosse and rampart, I do not recollect.

The fosse seemed to be about seven or eight feet

deep, even after the great lapse of time since its original formation ; and it is highly probable that it served the Romans all the time they were in that country, as I never heard of any other camp in that quarter. After subduing the people in Lower Galloway, opposite to the north of Ireland, the Romans appear evidently to have directed their line of march towards the interior of the island, nearly in the line of road that leads to Edinburgh, still keeping towards the north-east in an oblique direction, as their camps and moats, or forts, plainly point out.

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## CHAP. II.

*Containing a short account of Agricola's several Campaigns.*

JULIUS AGRICOLA was sent into Britain as governor, under Vespasian, to succeed to Frontinus, towards the end of Vespasian's reign, which, according to Tacitus, was in the year 78 of the Christian era. He subdued the Ordovices and the Isle of Mona or Man, as well as the Gallovidians, that year, which includes his first campaign. He seems to have penetrated as far as the river Nith in his se-

cond campaign, which answers to the year 79. Vespasian dying about the end of the preceding year, his son Titus, who succeeded him, knowing the great merit of Agricola, continued him still in his government; and he all along approved himself worthy of the confidence reposed in him. His second campaign commenced in the spring of the year 79, in which he is said to have taken the field again, and to march toward the north, where he extended his conquests. He observed that the Romans commonly lost in the winter what they gained in the summer, because they durst not venture to quarter in the conquered countries, which were too much exposed. In order to remedy this, he resolved to build forts in proper places, where garrisons might be kept in winter always ready to repulse or to overawe the enemy. As he was a great master in the art of fortification, “these  
“forts were built and situated in such manner,  
“that the Romans were never under a necessity of  
“quitting them, nor the enemies ever able to take  
“them.” This passage of Tacitus is scarcely credible; there is evidently a good deal of compliment in it to Agricola, the historian’s father-in-law and favourite hero, and seems not to be very consistent with another passage, *Perdomita Britannia et statim amissa*, Hist. L. 1. c. 2. In their progress northward, the vestiges of their march are not so distinctly traced through the mountainous parts of Upper Galloway; but the line that the public road takes, crossing the Cree at Newton-Stewart,

leading by the line of road across the Dee to the capital, is indeed the only practicable one ; and there is some evidence that they had crossed the river Ken opposite to the village of Dalry, rather than at New Galloway, the road by which is three miles farther about. About six or seven miles beyond Dalry, in a wild sequestered muir, we find evident vestiges of their march in this direction still remaining, viz. an immense collection of stones now all grown over with moss. I stopped for some time and contemplated them with utter astonishment, to consider how, or for what purpose, such an immense and utterly incalculable number of these could be brought together in such a remote and desert place. The most probable conjecture I can form is, that the Roman army had been passing this way about the 18th of March, which was held by the Romans as the feast of Bacchus, styled *Liberalia*, or of Mercury. R. Elias Ascenaz says, that the religious honor which was paid to Markolis, (the same as the *Anubis* of the Egyptians, as the *Hermes* of the Greeks, and *Mercury* of the Romans,) consisted in throwing stones together into an heap ; and the whole army had been engaged in sacrificing to him in this manner. It will be attempted afterwards to be shewn, that the inhabitants of the Roman towns, that have been formerly and of late discovered, had sacrificed to Bacchus in offering those stones that seemed to be sacred to him, which are still to be seen on the hills adjacent to the towns, and which are immense in their number,

and also of a particular nature. It is well known that the chariot of Bacchus is represented as being drawn with tygers, lions, and lynxes, as emblematical or descriptive of the wild sequestered places where the rites of his worship were celebrated ; as it is only in such places that these savage and ferocious animals are supposed to be found ; as also further intimating that those who indulged most freely in those Bacchanalia wished to be retired, or hid from the public gaze. The vast collection of stones referred to, apparently many hundred cart loads, is to be found about half way betwixt the village of Dalry and that of Monyhive on the south side of the road, and to the west-ward of the stream called the Castle water, from Castlefern, an old place on the banks of it, till, after entering that pass through the hills, it meets with two other waters all at one point, which three conjoined constitute the considerable water of Cairn, a little below the village of Monyhive, and from whence it obviously derives its name. Both of these ancient words are still retained in our language, *mony* for *many*, and the word *bive* is used when bees are said to hive by a vast assemblage of them collected together. I understand there is a similar collection of stones, if not still larger, to be seen in a muir in Aberdeenshire, in the line of Severus's march to the north, about 120 years after this, and which I have no doubt had been left there by his army when thus sacrificing to Bacchus, or Mercury. On the left bank of the Cairn, a little below this, and not half

a mile above the Church of Glencairn, we find the foundations of one of the forts which Agricola had built for overawing the district of Glencairn, still called in the country a *Roman moat*. There is also another very remarkable and most stupendous moat, a good way south from this, situated on the left bank of the water of Urr, about 10 miles west from Dumfries. It is difficult to determine whether this one be natural or wholly artificial; it is very large, and rises from the plain, contiguous to the river, like an insulated rock in the midst of the ocean. It has two terraces, one rising above the other, and the second or upper one not half so large as the other, which is so considerable, that the plough has found its way into it, as the man who shewed it said that he had helped several years to cut down the corn growing on it. It is also called the Moat of Orr, or rather Urr. Though it is a considerable time since I saw it, yet, so far as I recollect, the lower one will contain about half an acre of ground, rising about 10 or 12 feet high; and the higher one, a great deal contracted, and rising about 10 or 12 feet above the first, is nearly 30 feet in height above the bed of the river. It has much the appearance of being artificial, and, if so, must unquestionably be a most stupendous work of human art, and, for its origin, must also be referred to the Romans; but I am rather inclined to think that it is partly natural and partly artificial. This one on the west, and the strong one at Burnswark, on the east of Dum-

fries, with the forts at Caerlaverock, Caerruchan, and Caerdonness, all which names point out that there had been forts erected at them, would have a tendency to check the whole of the southern coast all the way to the Solway Firth. Crossing the country still towards the north-east, in the line of road from Monyhive to the river Nith, and on the left bank of the Water of Scare, a little above where it falls into the Nith, and nigh the Kirk of Kier, the Romans had another station or post of observation; and a most commanding station it must have been, as it would have a full view of the pass up the Nith, from Dumfries by Closeburn, as well as the one from New Galloway by Penpont. We never find the name of Kier, but that place has a most extensive view, suited by its situation for commanding a pass, or for extensive observation, and plainly pointing out by its name that the Romans had a station at it. I know there are other two places of that name farther north; the one is a little north from Stirling, a short way above the confluence of the Forth and Teath, and well adapted for commanding the pass to the northward by the west end of the Ochill hills. The other one of that name is in Upper Strathearn, about two miles west from Duplin, upon an eminence on the north bank of the river Earn, and close by the great road that leads betwixt Stirling and Perth, a little way south of the Roman paved way through the wooded parks of Gask. It is one of the most commanding stations



for an extensive view any where to be found, comprehending a view of the whole of Upper Strath-earn; and no troops could pass north or south through Lower Strathearn without being observed by the garrison. I am fully of opinion, then, that there have been Roman stations at all these three places named Keirs,—the same as the old British word *Caer*, a fort; and no places could be better adapted for these than they appear to have been. The Romans evidently seem to have crossed the river Nith, much about the place where the road from the south now lies, nigh the beautiful house of Drumlanrig, belonging to the Queensberry estate. That they have been here, they have given the most indubitable evidence, by leaving behind them one of the most precious relics of antiquity any where to be found, though, alas! it may be now said to be no more, or in utter ruins.

The antiquity referred to is nothing less than a small round building that Agricola had erected upon the left bank, in a bend or curve of the Nith. As the river here is very beautiful, and apparently much about the size of the Tiber at Rome, and also further resembles it in running southward, as that famed river does, it is evident they had, from some such considerations as these, given it the name of the Tiberis, which name the ruins of the building still retain. It is, indeed, something remarkable that this name, obviously given it by the Romans, has been faithfully retained in the country, with very little variation, being pronoun-

ced Tibbers; with two b's instead of one, Tiberis or Tibris. This is allowed by all the country around to be a Roman work ; and they necessarily infer that the Romans had been there, which must be allowed to be very natural and just. They, however, conjecture that Tibbers is a contraction of Tiberius, and that it was he that had crossed here, and erected this tower to his memory. In this opinion, however, I think they are not so happy, as it is well known that Tiberius was never in Britain ; and, besides, he was dead more than fifty years before this was erected. It is something extraordinary that this remarkable antiquity has never been previously taken notice of by any antiquary or tourist, so far as I know. It was only on account of my being in the populous village of Thornhill, about two miles below this, that I came to learn the particulars about it ; and the substance of what I could learn, upon particular inquiry at different old people, was that it was a small round building of stone, without any apparent cement, much resembling the one that stood till lately, 1742, on the left bank of the river Carron, called Arthur's Oven.

The unfortunate demolition of both these valuable Roman antiquities is evidently to be ascribed to very different causes. The one was wilfully demolished by the hands of a neighbouring proprietor, for the purposes of mending a mill-dam in the vicinity, who, not to say any worse of it, certainly showed a very depraved and uncultivated taste, by

unrelentingly demolishing such a noble monument of Roman antiquity for such a paltry consideration.

The ruin of the other, which plainly appeared to have been once a building, seems evidently to be rather owing to the lapse of time, and the impetuous inundation of the river, which seemed to have overwhelmed it, and choaked it up with stones and channel, brought down from the higher grounds in great speats or inundations. Some of the oldest people remember part of the wall standing pretty high, some time about the middle of last century. As this one, however, was obviously the first erected of the two, the one on the banks of the Carron appears to me to be in imitation of, or a model taken from, the other, and perhaps erected for the same purpose. Horsely, who had taken the pains to measure the one on the Carron, makes it to be 22 feet high by  $19\frac{1}{2}$  in diameter; so we may suppose that the one on the Nith had been originally about the same dimensions, though I believe this may be yet ascertained as to its foundation, if any person would take the trouble of digging around and down into the foundation, which, I believe, still remains. I only got a cursory view of it taken, as I was accompanied, on that occasion, by an English rider, who had no time to wait. I therefore lost the only opportunity that ever might have occurred of ascertaining its diameter. The circumstance of the name of the Tiberis being given to it, and which it has in a manner all along retained, makes me conjecture, with

great probability, that it had been a Temple of *Æsculapius*, the God of Physic, in commemoration of, or as a model of, the one which we learn was dedicated to him in an isle of the Tiber. We read from the Roman history\* that the Romans, being grievously afflicted with the pestilence, sent ambassadors to bring from Epidaurus to Rome the sign of *Æsculapius*, which was a serpent, that went aboard of its own accord, in which it appeared to them the God dwelt, as it was in that form he was there worshipped. When the ship came to the isle in the Tiber, the God landed there of his own accord, and a temple was consecrated to *Æsculapius*. Ovid also† gives a poetical account of it: That in that place *Æsculapius* is worshipped in a statue of a human figure, with a staff in his hand, and a serpent twined round it. As *Æsculapius*, then, in heathen mythology, was said to be the son of Apollo, who was also called the God of Medicine or Physic, and who was worshipped in the same manner as the other,—a cock being sacred to both,—I think it is highly probable that this had been a temple dedicated either to the one or the other of these heathen deities, or conjunctly to both. I am rather inclined to think that, though it may have been nominally built to *Æsculapius*, yet that it was in subordination to Apollo. What has a tendency

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\* Tit. Liv. Epitome, Lib. 11.

† Ovid. Metamorph. Lib. 17. Fab. 50.

the more to strengthen my conjecture is that, in this, as well as in the building of all the other forts formerly mentioned, the moats on the Cairn, on the Urr, the Scare, and also one on the Clyde to be afterwards mentioned, as well as the round temple that stood on the left bank of the Carron, there has been particular attention paid to placing them in such a position that the rivers are all directly on the south of them, where Apollo, Phœbus, or Sol, (for under all these three different names he was worshipped,) would be supposed to be in his meridian altitude. Amongst all the supposed deities of the ancient system of Heathen Polytheism, and the greatly diversified modes of worship given to them, one would be apt to suppose them least culpable in ascribing divinity to this splendid luminary, being the brightest emblem and most expressive representative of the Deity of all the works of His hands, in the whole inanimate creation; the Sun being viewed by all nations, who felt his most salutary and benign influences, as the all active and invigorating cause by which nature was so often renovated, after being in a state of decay, making it assume a youthlike beauty and verdure, thus annually raised to life from a state of deathlike torpor and inactivity, by participating in his energetic and vivifying influence.

It is generally allowed that the worship of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, was the most ancient kind of idolatry, long before images were introduced. The Chaldeans, the Persians, and particularly the Egypt-

tians, were early addicted to this kind of idol worship. According to Diodorus Siculus,\* “The most ancient people of Egypt,” says he, “beholding the world above them, and astonished with the sight of the universe, did think the Sun and the Moon were the two principal and eternal Gods; the latter they called *Isis*, and the former *Osiris*, agreeably to the etymology of the name; for if you explain Osiris by a Greek word, it will signify many eyes; and justly, since the Sun, stretching his rays every where, beholds the whole earth and seas as with many eyes.” So we plainly see that these two Egyptian deities, Osiris and Isis, were just these heavenly luminaries, the Sun and Moon, that were so long worshipped as their principal idols. The hieroglyphical representation of a circle with wings, and a serpent, which is often to be seen upon the frieze over many of their ancient columns and obelisks, is supposed to have some allusion, (though much corrupted), to an idea of the Trinity. Hence, Sanchoniathon, who wrote 1200 years before the Christian era, about the time of the Trojan war, in the fragments that are preserved of his Phœnician history,† says, “Jove is awinged sphere out of which a serpent is brought forth. The circle implies the divine nature, without beginning or end; the serpent shews his word, which ani-

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\* Bibl. Hist. Lib. i. Cap. 11.

† Stillingfleet, Orig. Sacr. Lit. 1. 2.

“ mates and fructifies the world ; and the wings refer to the spirit of God, which vivifies the world “ by this motion.” Sometimes the globe or spheres with the serpent only were placed in the *adyta* of their Temples, much resembling the Greek letter Θ ; and as the Romans borrowed the most of their idolatrous worship from the Greeks and Egyptians, it is highly probable that it was in allusion to, or as a model of this, that the Temple just now referred to on the Nith was erected, as it was evidently in this shape.

We now go on to endeavour to trace further the Romans in their line of march and conquest towards the great scene of their operations. About five miles from the Nith towards the north-east, still keeping the nearest line of road towards Edinburgh, we meet with another indubitable evidence of their having been here, in another of the beautiful camps they have left behind, still, it is believed, in excellent preservation. This camp stands about one mile above the church of Durisdeer, in that opening of the mountains nigh the road leading by Elvanfoot to Biggar. Agricola is said in his third campaign, which answers to the year 80, to have advanced as far as the river Tweed, and to have fortified his conquests with castles and fortresses in several places. In corroboration of this, and as an evidence that we are still tracing him in his principal line of operations, we find another of his camps on the left bank of the Lyne Water, which falls into the Tweed. This one stands a little south from the line of the present road to Edin-

burgh, in the parish of Newlands, so far as I recollect, a little above the confluence of the Lyne and the Tweed. Although, no doubt, he erected many of these forts on both sides of his line of march, yet it would be equally foolish as impossible for any one, at this immense distance of time, to pretend to find all these out. There are some of them, however, which obviously point out themselves as such; one of them is to be yet found standing on the Clyde a little west from Lamington. This is also evidently a Roman moat, or ancient fort; and forms a most beautiful and conspicuous object from the public road down the south side of the Clyde. The river here runs near to the north-east; and this, with all the other moats, is placed in such a situation as to have the river directly to the south of it, and is also placed nearly in the centre between the two waters of Duneton and Robertson, little more than half a mile from either of them, where they fall into the Clyde. Still farther north-east betwixt Lamington and Biggar, Tinto, a beautiful conical hill, points itself out as another fortress; and a most excellent, strong, and commanding one it would be. Though I must confess I was not on the top of it, yet, from the account I got of it, there have been strong works erected upon it, which yet appear, and which are vulgarly ascribed to Wallace, the Scots hero, but are undoubtedly of a far more ancient date. That Wallace may have been there, I shall not here dispute; but that such strong works, as



these seem once to have been, according to the account given of them, were ever erected by him, there is not the least shadow of probability. Though it be a little high, yet it is not more so than the Hill of Burnswark in Annandale, which is universally allowed to have had a strong Roman work or fortress on the top of it. As Tinto commands a most extensive view of the Lower Clydesdale, about Glasgow, and down the Clyde, all the way to Dumbarton and the mouth of the Clyde, as well as the western part of where the Roman wall was afterwards built, it is highly probable that, from the top of Tinto, Agricola, seeing that the firth of Clyde ran so far inland, when he advanced farther east, and also perceived that of the Forth running so far westward, he may have formed the plan of uniting these two by a line of forts, which he afterwards effected. A stranger, in travelling from the south, and coming in a manner all at once upon the Clyde, is very apt to mistake it for the Tweed, as I certainly did, especially after following its course for so many miles in the same direction that I knew the Tweed ran, until I came to Lamington, and could scarcely credit the hostess of the inn when she told me it was the Clyde. This, however, is nigh its *ne plus ultra* in this direction, taking a sudden turn here, and running a far way in an opposite direction. These two beautiful rivers, the Tweed and the Clyde, take their rise in the same hill, and their sources, being very near each other, but the Clyde, taking a long and

circuitous course, after collecting many tributary streams, by the time it has arrived here, has assumed the appearance of a considerably large and beautiful river ; and still continuing its course, as if intent upon joining the Tweed, and mingling their kindred streams together, and also augmenting the latter greatly by bringing a vast accession of water along with it, which, but for the high ground on the south base of Tinto, it certainly would have effected. Here, however, Tinto interposes an effectual barrier to the course of the Clyde in this direction, which, after winding round its base a little way, as if in quest of a passage, and not finding one, takes a sudden turn, as if in disgust, and for several miles recedes in the opposite direction, till it meets with the water of Douglass, a considerable stream ; and then, in a north and north-west direction, they roll on together, still augmenting in their course, and forming several beautiful cataracts, until they be ingulphed in the Atlantic Ocean.

In Agricola's fourth campaign, which answers to the year 81, he is said to have subdued the nations inhabiting the country between the Tweed and the two firths of Glotta and Bodotria, now called the firths of Clyde and Forth. These two arms of the sea extend so far inland, that they form an isthmus of only betwixt 30 and 40 miles. Upon this isthmus he raised forts, and planted garrisons, for the security of the Roman province, which he had extended thus far. The line of forts which he raised is said to extend along

in the line where the Roman wall was afterwards begun to be built by Lollius Urbicus, and finished by Antoninus Pius, extending from Caer-ridden on the Forth, to West Kilpatrick on the Clyde: So that, by this means, the nations yet unconquered might be said to be pent up as in a separate island. During these operations, I suppose that the Roman army had had a camp as well as a station about Camelon, near the banks of the Canal, a little west from Falkirk. It seems to have been a Roman station, from monuments of Roman antiquity said to have been found about it, such as stones dug up with inscriptions on them, mentioned by Buchanan, proving them to be of Roman origin. It appears to have been one of their *Castra æstiva* or *hiberna*, summer or winter quarters, or perhaps both, adjoining to which the soldiers had buildings erected in which they lodged, forming a sort of town, to which the station was in the nature of a citadel. The camp nigh the road betwixt Edinburgh and Dalkeith, about a mile north from the latter place, is called the Roman camp, as unquestionably it is; but I suppose it not to have been one of Agricola's, as it seems to differ a little from the form of his camps, those ascribed to Agricola being longer, or more of an oblong square, whereas this is more inclining to a square. This one in my humble opinion seems rather to have been one of Severus's camps, and perhaps one of those called *Castra Stativa*, standing camps, where he may have continued for some time, being supplied by his fleet from

Portobello, not far off, or Fisher-row at the mouth of the Esk, the former of which seems obviously to have been a port of the Romans, from its name, evidently of Roman origin, signifying the *War Port* or the haven for landing materials or supplies for carrying on the war. The Roman paved way yet remaining in the vicinity, called the Fishwives Causeway, points it out as having been also formed about this time for conveying, with more convenience and speed, the supplies brought by his fleet to his army. We have accounts that he had a very numerous army, and would require large supplies, which could be easily procured by his fleet; for there is every appearance that his line of march was from the east, as the fleet could coast it all the way nigh in view of the army. There has also lately been found a Roman bronze bason, dug up in a ditch in the vicinity of Haddington, which, it is highly probable, had been left by Severus, or some of his army, in passing at this time. From the description I got of it from one of the present bailies, it appears to resemble much one of those vessels lately found at Balcanquhall. I also learn that there has been a large Roman urn and other antiquities lately found near Portobello, which plainly indicate that it has been a place of great antiquity, and of greater resort by the Romans than is generally supposed.

Agricola, in his fifth campaign, which answers to the year 82 of the Christian era, is said to have led his army beyond the Firths, where he discover-

ed countries and nations whose very names were previously unknown to the Romans. Some of these he conquers, builds forts, and leaves garrisons in the western parts, such as Caerstairs, Caerluke, Caermichael, Caerlops, Caermunnock, &c. in Lanarkshire, and still more to the westward, or opposite to Ireland. His design was to attempt the conquest of that island, that it might be a check upon Britain, as he was perfectly well informed of the state of the country by a Lord banished from thence. The places here alluded to must be Ayrshire, and the coast to the westward about Girvan and Ballantrae, and north as far as the mouth of the river Clyde. In the meantime, Agricola commanded his fleet, which seems to have been lying inactive some where about the western coast, to take a circuitous voyage around the island to discover its utmost boundaries; in doing which, they saw the *Ultima Thule*, which is supposed to be the northernmost of the Orkney Islands, and by which they also first discovered Great Britain to be an island; and then, returning along the eastern coast, were ready to meet the army against its arrival at the Frith of Bodotria or Forth.

In the sixth campaign, which answers to the year 83, the Roman general passes Bodotria, or crosses the Frith of Forth, with his army into Fife, ordering his fleet to row along the coasts, and discover the creeks and harbours in those northern parts. This is said to be the first *Roman* fleet which appeared in those seas, the sight whereof inspired

the enemy with terror, but the Romans with courage, who, having ventured upon those unknown countries with some dread, were extremely animated by the communication they had with their fleet, which always kept near the shore. It is plain, however, that the sailing of the fleet behaved to have been very limited, else they would of necessity soon lose all communication with the army; for they appear to have crossed the Frith some where about the mouth of the Carron, where Grangemouth now is; and their fleet might sail down the Frith a few miles, and still keep up a communication with the army for the first and second encampments; but, beyond that, they could scarcely be said to do so, at least they would be out of the sight, if not out of the reach, of their fleet. A few miles towards the north-east of where they are supposed to have crossed over to Fife, we find two of their beautiful camps, about two miles north-west from Dunfermline, pretty near one another, being still in excellent preservation, from which the farm they stand on has derived its name, and is still called *The Camps*, or Camps of Carnock, from whence they appear to have marched east behind Aberdour, till they came to Dunearn-hill, and formed another camp opposite to where their fleet had anchored at Burntisland, and then marched north to the camp at Lochore. There is a Roman camp in the parish of Strathaven; and the proprietor of a farm called Torfoot in that vicinity, when draining a small bog, several years

ago, found a sealed bottle or jar full of Roman coins, some of them in good preservation, though a considerable number were run together by corrosion. While Agricola was advancing towards the north, a report was spread that the northern nations had collected a formidable army, and attacked the forts built on their frontiers. The news of this armament being confirmed a few days after by deserters, the principal officers of the army advised Agricola to relinquish his conquests, and retreat in time across the Frith, rather than seem to be compelled to it by force. But he rejected this advice, as injurious to his master's honour and interest. While he was deliberating on this affair, he had notice that the enemy were coming upon him with a very large army, according to common report. Apprehensive of being surrounded, he divided his army into three bodies, hearing the enemy had done the same. This precaution had like to have cost him dear. For the enemy, having intelligence of it, altered their resolution, and with united forces attacked the ninth legion in the night, as they lay encamped at a good distance from the rest of the army. They surprised the advanced guard, and, attacking the camp with great fury, had like to become masters of it. Agricola, upon notice of their march, made all possible haste to the relief of the legion. But, for fear of being too late, he ordered the horse to go before, and maintain the fight till the rest of the army came up. The battle

was fierce and obstinate, and continued till daylight, so that the Romans were almost defeated in their camp. But, after fighting furiously for some time after the other legions came up, the enemy were obliged to give way, and retreat into the fens and mountains. This action is universally supposed to have taken place at Lochore, where there is a camp answering to the description given of the battle, at the little village of East Blair, near Lochore, where they seem to have wintered ; and this appears to be the very camp that Mr Chalmers, in his *Caledonia*, supposes to be the one in which they received such a severe check from the Caledonians, by their attacking their camp by night, and nearly cutting off the whole ninth legion. In confirmation of this, when the late Mr Sim of Lochore was draining the loch, the men found a Roman camp kettle, a dart or dagger, a head of a battle axe, and some of the burnt ends of the palisadoes, which the workmen called Tent Feet : A man also, a good many years ago, when ploughing in the neighbourhood of the ruins of an ancient building, obviously a Roman fort for guarding that great road or pass from the south, found two large silver coins ; but, being ignorant of what they were, or of the value of them, they were given to a travelling pedlar for goods. Here Buchanan seems also to agree with Chalmers, without mentioning the place. All that we can learn from the former is, that the Roman general, “ understanding that the “ Caledonians were about to give him battle, and



“ marching in three brigades, he drew towards  
 “ them, having divided his army into three dis-  
 “ tinct brigades also ; which project almost proved  
 “ his utter ruin. For his enemies, coming to learn  
 “ his design, changed their purpose, and did, with  
 “ their whole army, assault one of his legions by  
 “ night ; and, having killed the centinels, went nigh  
 “ to have taken his whole camp ; but being pre-  
 “ vented by the coming in of the other legions,  
 “ after they had fought desperately till day-light,  
 “ they were at length put to flight, and retreated  
 “ into the mountains and woods.” This action  
 happened about the sixth year of the expedition.  
 The partially successful assault which was here  
 made upon the Roman camp, as well as the battle  
 that was fought in the spring thereafter, which we  
 are about to describe more particularly, was no  
 doubt managed by the direction and under the im-  
 mediate eye of the King, who reigned over the  
 Caledonians at this time, who was the brave  
 Corbredus the Second, surnamed Galdus, or Gal-  
 gacus, as he is named by Tacitus, who is universal-  
 ly allowed to have been a worthy and valiant prince.  
 The Pictish King, whose capital or place of re-  
 sidence was then Abernethy, would no doubt be  
 in this battle, as he was most interested in the suc-  
 cess of it ; for the Romans were then in his terri-  
 tories, and still penetrating further into the more  
 fertile parts of his kingdom. They were, when the  
 battle commenced, marching directly upon his capi-  
 tal, and were then within less than five miles of it ;

this could not but put him in a great state of alarm for the safety of it, and incite him to make every effort in the power of the combined Kings of the Scots and Picts, who were then in close alliance, and who were both called Caledonians by the Romans. The date of this battle may also be pretty nearly determined, if we advert that this is said to have taken place about the sixth year of Agricola's government; and Corbred, who was the Caledonian prince who fought the battle with the Romans, is said by Buchanan to have begun his reign in the year of the Christian æra 76, and to have died in the 35th year of his reign, which would happen in 111; but this battle would seem to have been fought soon after he began to reign, as he is said to have long survived the recal of Agricola, which is generally agreed to have taken place not long after this, or very soon after the following battle was fought. He is said to have fought the Romans afterwards with better success,—to have been often victorious,—and at last to have expelled them from his territories, where they were forced to contend with the Britons for their ancient province, even with doubtful success.

We can learn, also, that the Caledonians were much exasperated at the Romans for shutting them out from commerce with their southern neighbours, the Britons, by the line of Forts just then built by the Roman general; and that the Roman soldiers were much alarmed for their safety, not thinking themselves sufficiently secure in their camp from

the attacks of the Caledonians, especially after the desperate assault they so lately received from them, which would tend to whet their spirits with revenge, that they were so outwitted by them.

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### CHAP. III.

*Giving an account of the Battle of Meralsford or the Lomond Hill, which Tacitus has mistaken for Mount Grampius.*

IN Agricola's seventh campaign, which answers to the year 84, the Romans seem evidently to have marched from their camp at East Blair, where they had been in winter quarters, as early in the spring as the weather and the rivers would permit them to pass; and appear to have crossed the Leven a little below where the Gullet Bridge now stands; to have advanced forward by Scotland Well, Kinnes Wood, and where the two Balgedies now stand; then, at the village of Pittendriech, to have turned more towards the north-east, through the farms of Wester and Easter Gospetrie, towards a gap or opening in the higher grounds on the other side of the vale of Eden, which would appear

then in view as the most probable and easy passage towards Strathearn ; and, in the west side of this opening, the foresaid precious morsels to the antiquary were found.

By the time the Romans reached the farm of Easter Gospetrie, they would have a full view of the brave Caledonians drawn up on the other side of the Eden in order to give them a warm reception ; and a warm reception it seems indeed to have been. They seem to have crossed the Eden a little below where the small village of Burnside or Burngrange now stands, where, by the junction of three streams, the Eden assumes the appearance of a small river, still keeping the line of the new proposed road betwixt Burntisland and Perth, all along from where they crossed the Leven, towards the new road lately made from Glenfarg Inn to Gateside, passing the old castle of Balvaird. At Burnside, they were within less than a quarter of a mile of the Caledonians, having only to cross, in a north-east direction, the south-east angle of the farm of Bonnety, when they entered upon the lands of Edenshead ; and there they came first in contact with the Caledonians, where a large cairn, erected upon the march betwixt these two lands, straight east from the farm-steading of Bonnety, which stood till about these twenty years back, evidently points out the extremity to where the left wing of the Roman army had extended. The ground seems to have been well chosen by the

Caledonians for making a stand against the Romans, being firm, light, and dry, with a gentle slope towards the south and south-east, having both their flanks defended by strong ramparts of turf or earth thrown up. There the battle seems to have commenced betwixt the two armies. With their minds so mutually exasperated against one another, and under two such renowned generals as the excellent and experienced Agricola, and the brave and valiant Corboud the Second, or Galgacus, as he is called by Tacitus, we may be assured that the struggle would be terrible the time that it lasted, and the slaughter immense. That it was so, the ground all along where the battle had raged gives abundant proof, notwithstanding the extraordinary lapse of 1700 years, by vast quantities of bones, half burnt ashes of bones, pieces of iron, beads, broken urns, &c. which are yet frequently turned up by the plough, even after the general burning of the dead, which the Romans always practised, and which was evidently done in all the other places where the battle raged. The ground on which this first rencontre took place was calculated for allowing the brave Caledonians to display their native valour to advantage; and there they seem to have done it to purpose, and to have had decidedly the advantage in the first struggle. Had the Romans, then, not betaken themselves to those military stratagems with which the brave Caledonians charged them, and by which alone they gained any

advantage over them, they would have been entirely worsted, and the victory on the side of the Caledonians would have been complete. Here, then, their conduct fully verifies this accusation to have been but too well-founded, else they would have continued to fight it out, where each of the armies would have had an equal chance for the victory by mere dint of valour. But that they were not able to sustain the first shock of the Caledonian valour, their retreat across the Eden abundantly demonstrates. The Eden, from where they first crossed at Burnside, runs a mile and a half due east, till it reaches the ancient house of Edenshead, with its south bank only a little steep; and, so far as this, it only has the name of the water of Miglo, from whence the town of Strathmiglo derives its name; but, receiving another tributary stream from the north, joining it at the house of Edenshead, it there acquires the name of the Eden, and retains it all the way till it reaches the German Ocean. From where it receives its name, it runs for about a mile and a half, confined within pretty steep banks on both sides, till it reaches a wider plain; and there it spreads out into a ford, which is always passable, except when swollen by rain. The retreat of the Roman army across it, about two and a half miles to the west, was clearly pointed out, till of late, by the large cairn at the place where the battle commenced, running in a straight line over to another cairn on the south side of the river, which, I be-

lieve, is still remaining on the east side of the farm of Easter Gospetrie, a little to the eastward of a dark fir planting.

From this cairn, their march had commenced towards the east, down the south side of the river, crossing two streams that fall into the Eden from the south, by which the farm of Lappie is bounded on the west and east ; then entering on the farm of Lacesstown, keeping a little to the south-east, in front of where the farm-steading now stands, directly upon another cairn that remained, till of late, upon the west side of the western farm of Nether Orquharts,—but which is, alas ! now no more. All these ancient remains of Roman antiquity have fallen a sacrifice to the great rage that took place for inclosing lands about thirty years ago, or even within a less period as to some of them.

At this cairn, the Romans seem to have formed an obtuse angle, turning a little to the left, and marching due east through the two farms of Nether Orquharts, and a little in front of where the farm-houses now stand, still proceeding due east through the farm of Upper Orquhart, till they came opposite to the ford formerly mentioned. The Caledonians seem to have marched down on the north side of the river all the way from where the battle commenced, having the Romans always in view, who no doubt would be waiting here, either to oppose their passage if they attempted it, or to attack them in the rear if they passed down by it. The Romans would evidently perceive this, and justly

conclude that it would be certain destruction if they should attempt to cross it in face of the whole Caledonian army. They seem here evidently to have put in execution one of those military stratagems for which the brave Caledonians blamed them, and by which alone they were successful against them, by making a feint as if they intended to march farther down the country, in order to entice them across the ford; and, with a view to make the decoy take better, they seem actually to have marched a considerable way past the ford, down to where a large cairn long stood on the farm of Drumdriell, a little south of where the old tower of Croyston now stands. This evidently points out how far the van of the Roman army had advanced. The brave Caledonians, little suspecting the snare which was thus so well laid, seem to have been led into it, by actually attempting to cross in full sight of the Roman army. They might be considerably elated by their success in the first rencontre, which no doubt would conduce not a little towards making the bait take. Imagining that the Romans were flying away as if vanquished, they would heedlessly rush through to make the victory complete; little aware that this was the very circumstance which made the scale of victory, evidently on their side before, turn against them, and completely incline to the side of the Romans. For, as soon as the Romans had perceived that the stratagem was succeeding, and that the Caledonian army was crossing, or had partly



crossed, the ford, they seem to have wheeled about, and advanced down upon them in an oblique direction, with the extremity of their right wing bearing directly upon the passage of the ford, as appears from a smaller cairn which I recollect to have long stood a little to the south-west of the old tower of Croyston, though, alas! now gone with all the rest. Had all these cairns still stood, on both sides of the river, they would have still pointed out to the attentive observer all the movements of the Roman army almost as exactly as though he had been an eye-witness. The Romans appear to have come down upon them long before they could bring the one-half of their troops over, on account of a narrow ravine leading into the ford, so as that they could not lead over large bodies of men at once, but only in narrow files. This would naturally bring on a desperate struggle immediately on the south-east of the ford, where the river takes a sudden bend to the south-east, and serves as a key or inlet to the passage of the ford on the south; and whichever party had possession of this important post would be completely master of the passage of the ford. The brave Caledonians nobly strove to keep possession of it, in order to cover the passage of their troops across, and to allow them to form towards the south-west and west, as they came over. The Romans, on the other hand, endeavouring by all means to get possession of a place which they would perceive at once to be of such importance, as that the very success of the

battle depended on it, would no doubt bring all their forces to bear upon that point ; and, having the advantage, both from the nature of the ground and from their troops being already drawn up, they would be better enabled to maintain it. After a desperate and bloody struggle, they seem evidently to have carried the point, and to have obtained full possession of the passage.—The knob of the handle or hilt of a Roman sword was found close by this a few years ago by the same man who found one of the Roman coins.—Notwithstanding those brave Caledonians who had already passed the river, who no doubt would be the most valiant of their army, appear to have been thus cut off from all future succour from their brethren on the north side, yet they seem to have maintained the struggle for a long time, and to have fought with determined bravery and resolution, till the field was literally choked up with the dead. The slaughter here seems to have been so dreadful, that, even after the extraordinary lapse of seventeen centuries, the common tradition of the country bears,—and seems to be as fresh in the mouths both of old and young as though the battle had been fought only a hundred years ago,—that, after this battle, the river Eden ran red with blood for two days ! which tradition, being so long kept, seems to be nearly as marvellous as the circumstance that gave name to the ford, viz. Merals, or Marvellous Ford. Now, it only could be the blood of those who fell at this ford, or in the immediate neighbourhood, which could ever mingle

with the streams of the Eden; for, however great the slaughter may have been in the other places where the battle had raged, yet they were at such a distance from the Eden, and the ground so dry,—no rill or brook being near to convey the blood that was shed into it,—that it never could reach it, but be absorbed by the ground. Now, this was not the case here; for a small brook runs from the south into the Eden at Merals ford, and directly through the field of battle, which no doubt would be choked up by the multitude of dead who there fell, and which, in some measure, accounts for the truth of the tradition; because, when the Romans came to collect and burn the dead, which very probably would be the day after the battle, this would make the blood run afresh into the river.

A large body of Caledonians, after they were cut off from marching through the ford, by the Romans obtaining full possession of that pass, seem to have gone up above half a mile, and to have crossed the river at a small haugh or low plain ground,—where the banks of the Eden shelve gradually on both sides, a little to the westward of where a spinning-mill now stands,—in order to take the Romans in flank, or rather to fall on their rear; for they seem to have enclosed the brave Caledonians in the form of a net, as appears by the nature of the ground, by the river having a small bend on the west, with steep banks, where the left wing of the Roman army would extend to; and their right wing, reaching the other bend near the ford, would thus

prevent the Caledonians from enlarging their front, so as to fight to any advantage. In order the better to protect their left wing, there seems to have been a strong rampart raised along the top of the bank, a considerable way to the westward, and carried down to the river, making it almost perpendicular, though steep of itself before. This makes me fully confirmed in the opinion that the scheme had been deeply preconcerted by the Roman General,—the ground reconnoitred,—and the trap as it were so fully prepared, as that the brave unsuspecting Caledonians could scarcely fail falling into it.

The crossing of that body at the spinning mill seems to have been observed by the Romans ; and this would naturally cause them to detach a large body of their troops to prevent the Caledonians falling on their flank. This would necessarily bring on a sharp engagement ; the Caledonians being enraged almost to madness to think that they were cut off at the ford from affording help to their brave brethren so valiantly fighting, even though closely environed by their enemies.

A severe and bloody conflict seems to have taken place in a park south from the mill, where the Roman detachment appears to have met the Caledonians. It must have been extremely bloody to the Romans, and a great number of them must have fallen, from the immense number of the ashes of burnt bones found there, lying in large pits in the form of stone coffins, and covered with thin broad flags.

Now, the ashes of the Caledonians, that were burnt at all the other places where the battle raged, never had that distinction paid to them, as to have them covered in the form of stone coffins, but were left as they had been burnt in one common mass.

There was also a very large cairn laid upon these ; and the proprietor lately told me that (*See App. I.*), when removing the stones, besides the ashes already mentioned, there was also a pit of pure fine sand by itself, about as fine as is usually put into sand-glasses, which he thinks had been used for regulating the fire in burning of the dead. This cairn stood a little north of an ancient Druids' temple, only one stone now remaining, out of ten of which it formerly consisted. It was erected at the south end of the hollow, where the engagement had taken place, where it appears the Romans had been waiting ready to attack the Caledonians as soon as they had come up from the passage of the river. This, I think, is still more confirmed, when the ground is viewed which the Romans occupied, which is more in their favour than the Caledonians ; but, if they had been allowed to proceed over the height to the eastward, then the ground would have been decidedly in the favour of the Caledonians ; but, after the warm reception they met with, and the sound drubbing they got from the brave Caledonians where the battle commenced, they seem to have been always afraid to allow the Caledonians their own choice of the ground. I visited lately the field of battle, taking a more particular inspec-

tion of it. In addition to what is already observed, I find that the road into the ford from the south, for about 200 yards, is through a narrow hollow, no wider than the cart tract, but pretty deep, through which the small brook runs into the ford, before entering into this tract, through narrow steep banks. It then turns more to the south-west, for about other 300 yards. It appears plain that it was upon the banks of this small brook that the Caledonians had been drawn up, with their front to the south-east; crossing it towards the fore-mentioned bend in the river, in order to oppose the Romans coming from that quarter. The struggle seems to have been here so long, and so tremendous, that it is very probable that it was literally filled up with dead bodies; but that, after the Romans had succeeded in turning their left wing, and had got possession of the ford, it would make them alter their front more to the east and north-east. It is likewise highly probable that, after a terrible struggle, they had succeeded in turning their right wing, and making them fall back, as appears from the nature of the ground; and then they would be cooped up in a narrow corner, and either be obliged to fight at a very great disadvantage, or to retreat across the river the best way they could.

There is a pretty steep bank which runs almost the whole length of the field from east to west, a little behind what had once been the southern bank of the river, formed by the sudden rush of the waters after they began to subside after the flood; and,

if they were once driven over that bank, it was impossible for them to rally again. At the west end of this bank the Romans had thrown up the fore-said entrenchment, to secure their left flank ; and there seems to have been a great slaughter of the Caledonians at that place, by their attempting to break through, or turn it, as there are two pits which have been filled with skulls, which they seem to have thrown in without even being at the trouble of collecting and burning them, as at the other places where the dead have been burnt. These two pits are a very little in front of the entrenchment on the steep bank of the river, and may be easily perceived in the eastern corner of the wooded bank. One of them had been opened some time ago ; and I remember to have heard that the man who took out the stones came to so many skulls, that he became absolutely terrified, and went home and would work no more at it. The other pit seems never yet to have been touched ; but, if opened, I have no doubt but the same appearances will be seen as in the other one. Besides the various places in which the dead have been burnt on both banks of that once bloody small stream, which have been already opened, I perceived another cairn or tumulus on its western bank, which has never yet been touched, the park dike of the enclosure being carried over the top of it, and crossing the brook to the eastward. This naturally led me to muse upon the great bloodshed which had once, and at so distant a pe-

riod, taken place on that spot. I was much assisted in this, by observing some of the mouldering bones of the brave Caledonians who fell there, which had been recently thrown up by the moles in their heaps ; and happening to pick up one about two inches square, a piece of the sternum or breast-bone, after being exposed to the action of the weather for about 1737 years, I took it carefully home with me. I know not whether any of the genii, who are represented as presiding over the field of battle, was offended with me for encroaching on its precincts or guardianship, or whether it wished to exhibit some of its heroes in a more amiable point of view ; but one who was the instrumental cause of shedding more human blood than any on record, either ancient or modern, namely Buonaparte, was introduced to me in my sleep,—not indeed as a ruthless, unfeeling, bloody warrior, but as an amiable, pleasing, and very agreeable companion ; and instead of that distant hauteur for which he is said to be so distinguished, he was represented as one of the most familiar, easy, and communicative beings imaginable ; by which he so gained upon me, that I was sorry to lose his company ; but always when I wished him to stay with me, he seemed to break off abruptly, without my knowing where he went. But when he returned next day, and I began gently to chide him for leaving me, he seemed to apologize in a very modest and humble manner ; but, just as he was about to leave me a second time, and when at a short distance from me, by straining .



myself in crying after him to return, this awakened me, and I was sorry at being interrupted in enjoying such a very agreeable dream. This happened about two months before his death.

Here, now, I shall take the liberty of quoting a verse from a small collection of Scotch poems published by Alexander Douglas, in Strathmiglo, in 1806, in allusion to the battle of Meralsford; along with a foot-note by one who seems to be pretty well informed about circumstances connected with it:—

“ When Merals Ford \* ran red wi’ blood,

“ That was an awful hour man ;

“ There Scotia’s sons most firmly stood,

“ Maintain’d an’ gain’d the stour man.”

\* “ Merals or Marvellous Ford, about a mile west from Strathmiglo, on the water of Eden. Tradition relates that a bloody battle was there fought betwixt the Scots and Saxons. The water of Eden was so stained, that it ran red with blood for two days. The adjacent country bears ample testimony that the day had been warmly contested, and extremely bloody.

“ The battle had spread over the adjoining country. On the lands of Craigfod, belonging to Laurence Bonnar, Esquire, a vast cairn of stones had been reared; several stones of large dimensions were placed on their ends, and from thence called the *Standing-Stones*; these were lately taken out, and below them were found ashes, and the fragments of urns, &c. On the lands of Urquhart, belonging to John Millar, Esquire, which bounds with Me-

Those who survived the carnage at the ford; and crossed the river, seem to have united with those who had retreated after the sharp engagement near the spinning mill, and in such numbers as to induce them to give battle a third time to the Romans.

This last and desperate struggle seems evidently to have been on the lands of Craigfod, on the head of the rising grounds, with a gentle slope to the east, where they had the ground of their own choosing. Yet they appear to have been too much weakened, by their great loss sustained at the ford, to have any chance of victory. Notwithstanding this, if we can judge from the effects or lasting monuments of this engagement, which remained till

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" rals Ford on the south, a great number of bones, such as  
" skulls and large joints of the human body, were found,  
" interspersed with burnt ashes, and laid on beds of white  
" sand. On the lands of Edenshead, belonging to David  
" Walker, Esquire, upwards of an acre was occupied with  
" bones and ashes, beads, pieces of iron, &c. The wri-  
" ter of this note has found, almost level with the surface,  
" various bones of the human frame, partly calcined, and  
" others untouched by fire. In this place several urns  
" have been dug up; one of them is said to have been par-  
" ticularly elegant, adorned with fillets and sprigs. On  
" the lands of Welfield, belonging to George Cheap, Esq.  
" adjoining to Merals Ford, on the north, a conic hill was  
" levelled, which had been reared by human industry, in  
" a cavity of which was found a deer's horn, which, on be-  
" ing touched, fell into ashes. There are other cairns in  
" the vicinity untouched."

of late, it also appears to have been very bloody to both sides, and well contested to the very last. When that large cairn, which stood in Wellfield policy, a little to the right of the house, was removed about thirty years ago, a vast number of urns full of ashes were found, which the workmen called cans, and many of them finely carved ; some more coarsely than others. One of these is said to be so large that one of the workmen took it home for a butter can, 6 lb. of which it is said to be capable of holding. The greater part were broken and demolished by the men, many of whom are still alive, who plainly confess they did not know the use of them, in the absence of the late Mr Cheape. If we could be certain that the Romans did always, or even in general, inhume the ashes of their dead in urns, then it plainly appears that the slaughter among their troops had been so great as even to make them run short of, or to produce an absolute scarcity of urns among them ; because a great number of stone coffins full of ashes of burnt bones were found in the immediate neighbourhood of the cairn, when trenching and improving the ground. Probably many others may yet be found. There was also a stone coffin found a little south from the cairn, when digging a ditch for a stripe of planting, on the road-side, containing a very large skeleton at full length, with uncommonly large teeth ; but, whenever it was exposed to the atmospheric air, or touched, it crumbled down into dust. This, I think, had evidently been a person of distinction

among the Romans, as it, as well as the urns and other stone coffins, were all in the immediate vicinity of the great cairn. I am inclined to think that the urns here were only used for containing the ashes of their officers or persons of distinction who fell in battle, and the stone coffins the ashes of the common soldiers. The dead bodies of the Caledonians, who fell in the last rencontre, seem to have been burnt on an eminence about 400 yards to the westward, near the field of battle, on one grand funeral pile, with a great many stones thrown upon the spot, and several pretty large upright stones standing round it, though several others had been undermined and fallen over. What a noble monument of Roman antiquity! but now, alas! gone with all the rest of those ancient monuments. The proprietor told me that there were more stones in this cairn than built a rood of dyke 36 square yards! He also mentioned, that there was a capacious pit dug to the depth of about four yards, containing an immense quantity of ashes of burnt bones and charred wood, intermixed with layers of pure white sand; then a large quantity of stones thrown on irregularly; then a regular pavement of stones above these, on which were placed small leaden coffins about two feet long, all full of burnt bones. Each of these leaden coffins, amounting in all to seven, had a long stone erected on end above them, but so supported as not to press too hard upon the coffins; and, though the lead was fully the thickness of two inches, yet it was very

much wasted. These seem to have contained the bones of some persons of distinction among the Picts or Caledonians, who had fallen in this battle. These large stones placed round the cairn were called the Standing Stones ; but, alas ! now standing no more ; only three of the least of them, indeed, standing in the sides of gates in the neighbouring inclosures ! Though we have lost much by the demolition of these noble monuments of Roman antiquity, yet, by the opening of these, we have got a more confirming evidence, by the burning of the dead, that this was actually done by the Romans ; as it was they alone, in our island, who burned their dead. I fully believe, however, that, had these been known to be Roman antiquities, they would never have been troubled ; at least Mr Cheape, I am sure, is so much of an antiquary and Roman, that, had he been fully convinced that the cairn had been erected by them, he never would have removed a stone of it, but rather have reckoned it an ornament to his policies. The greater part of that cairn or tumulus was removed in his father's time. In erecting these standing stones, the Romans seem to have deviated from their common practice ; but it strikes me forcibly that it was in imitation of the Druids temple standing on the south side of the river, and the longest stone of which would then be in their view when erecting this, when they came to know that it was a temple erected for the worship of the God of the country. Agricola is said to have made himself

agreeable to the natives by erecting temples to them, of which this, with the one on the banks of the Nith, and that on the Carron, seems to be included. He seems, then, to have erected this one, evidently consisting of the same number of stones (ten), perhaps as a token of gratitude to the Gods for granting him the battle, which they would style the gods of the country, after their heathen manner: But to us there is but one God,—not one, indeed, in the blasphemous sense of the Arians, or Unitarians, and other blasphemous infidels, to the exclusion of God, the Son, and Holy Spirit; but one in the only true sense in which He in His revealed word, the only rule and standard of our belief, exhibits Himself, as Three in One, and One in Three, each possessing the whole Divine essence common to all three, and peculiar to each, without any confounding of persons, —which we are bound, upon our awful peril, implicitly to believe. It would be daring presumption in any sinful puny mortal blasphemously to reject and deny what they cannot, by their fallen and depraved reason, fully comprehend, because absolutely incomprehensible by finite understandings; for, according to the sublime poet Young,

“ The more of wonderful  
“ Is heard in Him, the more we should assent:  
“ Could *we* conceive *Him* God. He could not be,  
“ Or He not God, or *we* could not be men.”

These simple children of Nature worshipped Him as the great God, encircled only by ten rude stones set upright in the earth, their only covering being the wide canopy of Heaven. What a vast contrast betwixt this and the costly temples that have been built for His worship after He became the God of Revelation! York Minster or Cathedral, it seems, cost L.130,000, and St Paul's Cathedral one million and a half.

A good many urns were found when casting drains in the second park east from where the battle commenced, on Edenshead grounds, the ground being too thin for burying them deep enough. One of peculiar elegance and superior workmanship was dug up, which indicates that it contained the ashes of some officer of distinction among the Romans. There were also several urns found a few years ago, when digging the foundation of a malt barn at the west end of the village of Gateside, on the banks of the water which runs past Edenshead-house; and I have no doubt but the most of the flat thick ground adjacent to it, upon its banks, may be full of them. What a pity that there is nothing now remaining of these ancient standing stones, to point out to the inquiring antiquary the place of this remarkable battle! Though it is within twelve yards of the road side, and just about mid-way betwixt Wellfield policies and the village of Gateside, on the north side of the road, the hollow bason, around the brim of which these stones once stood,

is fast filling up every year by the ruthless plough-share.

About 150 yards north from the east end of the little village of Newbigging, and within 100 yards of the march of the lands of Balcanquhall, belonging to Sir John Hope of Pinkie, the foresaid precious relics of Roman antiquity were found. The spot had been a bog or well-head, to which the Romans had resorted for water to serve the General's household, at the time of their encampment, or for the soldiers of the garrison afterwards, as being above 300 yards nearer than the water which ran down the hallow at the east end of the inclosure, but which would supply all the rest of the army encamped around the mound to the south-east; for, as peace obviously appears to have been made with the King of the Picts, no formal camp would be necessary. The reason of their being found was, that the farmer, Mr Gilmer, in draining the bog, took about three feet of earth, to make the water have a more easy descent into a small rill which runs down the inclosure to the eastward. The plough came easily at them, by first coming upon the largest and turning it up; but unfortunately the point of the sock made a little hole in the side of it. As this one was only filled with clay, the next one, they imagined, would be filled with old coin. This made them a little more eager in the search, and at the same time more cautious; and by digging around, other four were found, but all filled with the same contents. I understand the ground has been trench-



ed for a considerable way round ; but nothing further has been found. The largest of them, which I saw, is evidently a culinary pot. Some perhaps would call it a Roman camp-kettle ; but it has nothing of the appearance of a kettle, but rather of the shape of our round bottomed ancient carron kitchen pots for making broth. One can have a very good idea of it, by conceiving a large globular tea-urn, containing about 9 or 10 Scotch pints, or 18 English quarts, having no other neck but the edges of the pot, about three inches broad, rising directly from the mouth of the urn, and slanting very much, with two hooks for suspending it on the fire by iron cleeks, with three strong broad feet projecting from the lower part of the bottom, just as long as keeps the lower point of the globe from touching the ground. The other three I did not see, as, the first time I called for that purpose, they had been sent to Perth to get them scoured up, or cleaned ; and, next time I went, they were on their way to Sir John Hope ; but, from the description of them, I understood two of them to be the tripods, or drinking vessels, that are mentioned in the Classics, such as wine flagons having three feet, about three inches long, intended for standing upon the general's table, and something resembling a coffee-pot, having a sprout or pipe also arising from its side, with a support under it, and three feet somewhat broad, resembling the human foot,—from whence called Tripods. They were a little globular at the bottom, and might contain about a

Scotch pint, or two quarts English, having each a handle with two supports, slanting considerably from the body of the vessel, and connecting it so as to support and strengthen it when full of liquor. The other one, which I did not see, is, I am told, a sort of bason, or perhaps a Roman frying-pan, which had at times been put upon the fire for warming victuals or liquor, or for keeping them warm, as blacking was found on the bottom of it when discovered ; a certain evidence that it had been on the fire. The fifth and last one, of which an exact drawing is given in the plan, is the least of the whole. It is at present in my possession ; and Sir John Hope is so kind as to allow me to retain it. It is of bronze metal, as all the rest are, and contains about one and one-half mutchkin Scotch, or one and one-half pint English, something resembling our common mutchkin stoups, but globular at the bottom, having also a handle. I have seen some ancient china cream pots somewhat like it ; only it has once had a lid, but long since broken off before it had been found. The neck still remains, and moves by a hole drilled through it betwixt the small round cheeks, the same as our common pint stoups ; and it has a strong copper wire for the hinge, rivetted on both sides of the cheeks. It has also a small triangular spout, evidently intended for keeping something warm, by standing at the side of the fire, and for pouring it out at table ; it seems to have received some injury from the fire on one of its sides, by standing too near it. It seems to be an old

veteran, literally worn out in the Roman service, and appears to have been an invalid before being brought from Rome ; it had received a wound in some of the campaigns in the upper part of its belly, which appears to have been healed, but very superficially, by knocking a small plug of lead into the wound with a hammer, the marks of which are still visible around the mouth of the hole. This had sufficed for a considerable period, and still does so ; but, through length of time, it had received another wound in the rim of the belly, and then had been left as an incurable. Notwithstanding the immense lapse of time it has been out of service, yet, by some little pains taken in curing it of its wound, it might be taken into service still. It is quite clear that all these vessels so found had once belonged to the general or commander-in-chief's household establishment, as they were all found in the neighbourhood of this Roman station.

I think it is pretty evident that the King of the Picts would sue for peace with the Romans when they lay here. If he was alarmed for his capital, &c. before the battle, it is quite natural to suppose that, after it was fought and lost by him, he would be doubly alarmed, and anxious to have peace concluded on any terms. I am the more confirmed in this opinion, from one of these beautiful green conical hills called Dunipacis, or hills of peace, being in the neighbourhood, which seems plainly to have been erected by the Romans at this time, and in commemoration of the peace then con-

cluded. It stands a little more than one and a half mile east of where the battle terminated, upon the water called the Baraway or Bar e-way, to which river it also seems to have given name, as it opposes itself directly to its course, then running due east, a little below the house of Pitlour, as if it would run through the hill ; but, by its high and rocky base, it is forced to take a circuitous course and wind round its northern base. It was very natural to observe that the hill was a bar or impediment in the way of its course, and the name might be transferred from this barrier to the water itself, and be pronounced the Bar-ye-way, which name it still retains. The hill formed a beautiful object, about twenty-five years ago, from the east, all the way from Auctermuchty till a little beyond it, by its verdant top and sides, and appearing in the middle of the plain, detached from every other eminence ; but now, alas ! it is no more what it once was, but, like all our other monuments of Roman antiquity, has most unfortunately been demolished. This, when in its beauty, and untouched, stood about one hundred and ten feet above the water of the Bareway, having a fine appearance from the east, west, and north, but not so much so from the south, as the ground rose gradually from that quarter up to near the middle of its summit, which may be the reason why it was never taken notice of by tourists or antiquaries. What a pity to destroy such a noble monument, unquestionably of Roman antiquity, for the paltry consideration of getting a few mate-

rials out of the heart of it for mending the roads! Its beautiful verdant top is gone, and its bowels excavated down to its middle, and its once beautiful verdant sides now disfigured and torn up by the plough. The house and steading built close by it on the south-east, to which it evidently gives name, plainly shews for what purpose it was erected, being called Dun, or Dunimax hill, very little corrupted from the name originally given it, Dun Pax Hill. The Romans when aiding Nature in making it, as it rose from a lofty base, had only to smooth its sides, and add something to increase its height and improve its summit. When they understood that the Celtic word for hill was Dun, they would add the Roman word for peace, Pax; joining them together, it would be called Dun-pax, peace hill, or the hill formed at the conclusion of the peace. This name it would unalterably retain so long as the Celtic language was spoken; but, whenever the Celtic gave way to the British, then the word Hill was added, and all three were conjoined, the Celtic, the Roman, and the British, Dun-pax-hill;—for, when the British language was substituted in room of the Celtic or Gaelic, the proper pronunciation would not long be adhered to, if it retained any thing like its original sound; so it easily accounts for the word Pax being turned into max. Something similar occurs in that famous work of Roman antiquity near Auchterarder, which had been made by the Roman soldiers when lying at the camp at Ardoch, to keep them in some sort

of exercise when they had nothing else to do. It is in the form of the hull of an immensely large ship, with its keel turned uppermost, and was called by them *Terræ Navis*, to which name the people there still in some measure adhere, at least in sound, though a good deal corrupted, calling it *Ternawwy*; and the farm adjoining derives its name from it. Thus I think it highly probable, if not clearly evident, that peace was at this time made betwixt the King of the Picts and Romans, and that it was concluded in the very place where the Roman General would pitch his camp. This would leave the brave Corbred to his fate. These things taken together, make this spot a most interesting one to the antiquarian. It appears to have been a Roman station; and the peace seems to have been concluded in Agricola's camp at Edenshead, very recently discovered. It has also the prospect of being soon still better known, whenever the new road proposed to be carried that way is finished, which will pass very nigh the small green mount upon which the Roman Eagle appears to have waved; as it is highly probable that the Romans stopt or encamped here in their return from the south, on their way to the north. There is in a manner a concentration of all these famous antiquities in this place, not only of those two just at hand, but looking east from the mount, you see the two stones yet standing, which directed their march upon it. This also points out the direct line where the large cairn once stood, at Wellfield House, though the very spot cannot be

seen for a stripe of planting ; the once beautiful *Dunpaci's* appears a little to the eastward, but now scarcely discernible, as its beauty is gone forever. The south part of the bloody field of Meralsford is also in view, as also the field near the Druids temple ; and, last of all, the one where the once famous standing stones so long stood,—all which have a tendency to make it a most interesting spot, indeed, to every one, whether they be professedly antiquaries or not.

On the same line with, and less than half a mile east from Wellfield House, there is an eminence partly artificial and partly natural, which still retains the name of the *Court know*, from the circumstance of the peace being concluded there, according to tradition, which behoved to be betwixt the King of Pictland, attended by his Court, and Agricola the Roman general, along with his principal officers. This was in the direct road that we may suppose the King of the Picts to have come from his capital the day after the battle, in order to have a peace concluded, leaving the brave Galgacus to his fate ; for we know that he disdained submission or any compromise whatever with the Romans.

The late General Skene, when planting the said eminence, assigned it as his reason for doing so, that it ought to be preserved as a great antiquity, not only from the tradition of the country, but also because he had some ancient papers that mentioned the circumstance.

There was also the pommel, or rather the guard of

the handle of a Roman sword lately found close by this spot, with a youthful Hercules with his club engraven upon each side, which I saw very lately.

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#### CHAP. IV.

*Account of the Battle of Meralsford, according to Tacitus, and of several things connected with it.*

IT is universally allowed by all who have taken any notice of the subject, that the attack of the ninth Roman Legion, in their camp, by the Caledonians, as mentioned by Tacitus, took place when the former lay in the camp, which still partly remains at Lochore; and the camp that the Caledonians occupied still remaining on the Hill of Binnartie, a little north of this, seems to confirm it. As it was this attack, and the sharp and obstinate engagement which it necessarily brought on betwixt the Romans and Caledonians, which was connected with, or seemed to be the more immediate cause of, the great and obstinate battle which took place so shortly after, I shall now endeavour to give a more particular account of the circumstances detailed by Tacitus himself, not only corroborative of this, but also tending more to con-



firm us in the belief that this battle is the very one which he means, and describes, through mistake, as having taken place at the foot of Mount Grampius, which he evidently mistook for the Lomond Hill; so this must be understood to be only what is termed by lawyers a misnomer. In this detail, I shall not only confine myself to what I deem a just commentary or deducible inference from his account, but also adduce what has further occurred to me, since drawing up the first account, as any way illustrative of the subject. Though, in the account which is given by Tacitus of the bold attack made by the Caledonians upon the Ninth Legion, he affects to call it a victory, yet all the victory the Romans seem to have had to boast of was owing to the seasonable bringing in of the other legions by Agricola, which made the Caledonians retreat to the woods and fens, and thereby prevented the legion attacked from being entirely cut off. He states, that the Caledonians, “*non virtute, sed occasione et arte ducis rati*,”—rather imputed it to the art and conduct of their general in coming so suddenly to the relief of his men; so that either side parted “*irritatis utrinque animis*,”—mutually irritated against one another. Is it, then, in the least probable, or even credible, that, when both sides parted thus mutually prepared for another brush, the Caledonians would ever allow the Romans to march directly upon the Pictish capital, which they were then very near, and through the most fertile, and by far the most populous

parts of their territories ; and even suffer them to cross three of the largest rivers in their kingdom, and flee, like a parcel of timid deer before their hunters, up to the mountains, nigh the space of forty miles, before they attempted to make a stand against the enemy ? Nothing but the weight attached to the authority of Tacitus, thrown into the scale, could ever have preponderated so long in making us believe this, notwithstanding the weighty mass of improbability to counter-balance it.

That there has been a battle fought betwixt the Romans and Caledonians in Stormont, there is not the least reason to doubt ; but it is nigh forty miles distant from this. Neither does it answer in the least to the description given by Tacitus, having no small hill and plain, or mountain, near it, which the one he describes is represented to have had, and which exactly agrees with the Lomond Hill, which he evidently by mistake calls Mount Grampius. Every other particular described by him will be found to answer to the Lomond Hill, or Meralsford, as it is still called in the country, except that he carefully conceals their retreat across the river Eden, because he considers it as disgraceful to the Roman arms.

But to set the question for ever at rest as to its being a Roman battle, besides the Roman vessels already alluded to,—the vast number of Roman urns found,—the burning of the dead in the various places where the battle had raged, which are known to have been only practised by the Romans while in this

country. Since drawing up the former account of the battle, there have also been discovered the foundations of a Roman town, in the vicinity of the field of battle,—a great number of Roman antiquities (bronze) found lying together, to the amount of about forty,—battle axes, darts, and other implements of war, four of which I have presently in my possession, an exact drawing of three of which is given in the plan,—and also a Roman coin found, of the then reigning Emperor Domitian, which also is in my possession :—All which prove, in the most incontestible manner, what is now contended for. If we attend, also, a little further to Tacitus, it may be easily perceived that the Caledonians, immediately after the last rencontre, made ample preparation for renewing their attack, and would certainly have done so, had not the Romans marched out of their camp, perhaps in order to prevent this.

Thus, instead of the islanders being any way disheartened by this partial defeat, they undauntedly resolved to try the fortune of war once more, imputing their misfortune to chance and other circumstances, rather than to the valour of the Romans.

*“ Nihil ex arrogantia remittere (inquit Tacitus) quo minus juventutem armarent, conjuges ac liberos transferrent.”* “ They abated nothing of their arrogance, but enlisted the stoutest men they had, and carried their wives and children to towns and places of greater security.”

*Seventh Campaign, anno 84.*—Upon opening the seventh campaign, “ Agricola orders his fleet to

“ row along the coast, to keep the several places  
“ in awe. At the same time he marches at the head  
“ of his troops, taking for guides some natives of  
“ known fidelity, who were acquainted with the  
“ roads. When he comes near the Grampian  
“ Mountain, he sees the enemies drawn up, to the  
“ number of 30,000, besides volunteers who flock-  
“ ed together to be at a battle, of which Liberty  
“ or Slavery was to be the issue.”

Here, then, according to the generally received opinion, or present mode of belief, he marches over about 40 miles of the most populous territories in all North Britain, and crosses over three large rivers, one of them the largest in the United Kingdom, all described within the space of three short sentences, arriving at the Grampian Mountains, without any apparent opposition, notwithstanding all the preparations made by the Islanders for another brush. But this will by no means tell ; however the account given by Tacitus fully coincides with the positions of both armies, when they would be in sight of each other. The Romans, before arriving at the farm of Easter Cospetrie, would be opposite to the Lomond hill, and so near it, that the land of that farm runs up to the foot of the hill ; and they would then have a full view of the Caledonians drawn up on the sloping ground, on the north of the vale of Eden.—Upon the armies approaching each other, Galgacus, commander of the Islanders, represents to them : “ That every thing that was valuable  
“ to them, their lives, their liberties, their proper-

“ ties, and privileges, and the lives of their wives,  
“ and children, and other relations, and every  
“ thing that was dear to them was at stake, and that,  
“ being at the extremity of the Isle, they have no re-  
“ fuge left if vanquished : and, therefore, nothing  
“ but victory can deliver them from perpetual bon-  
“ dage.” On the other side, Agricola exhorts his  
soldiers “ to do their duty, by the consideration of  
“ their past victories. Particularly, he sets before  
“ their eyes their sad condition, if, after being de-  
“ feated, they are forced to seek for shelter among  
“ the Britons, who, for fifty years together, have  
“ felt the force of their victorious arms.” Whilst  
the general is yet speaking, the soldiers, by their  
looks, discover their eagerness to fight, and their  
hopes of victory.

*Description of the Battle.*—“ The army was drawn  
“ up in such manner, that the auxiliary foot were  
“ to bear the first shock, in order to prevent, as  
“ much as possible, the effusion of Roman blood.  
“ The legions were placed in the rear, to support  
“ the auxiliaries in case of repulse. Galgacus had  
“ ranged his men on the side of a hill, that his  
“ whole army might be visible at once to the Ro-  
“ mans, and strike them with the greater terror.”  
This account is not strictly just, according to any  
idea we have of a hill, which is only a gentle slope  
for a great way above the field of battle, scarcely  
so much as to enable the Romans to view the  
islanders rising gradually above one another in their

ranks. It is quite obvious that he introduces a hill, that it may appear more consistent with the after part of the narration, particularly with the other field of battle at Merals Ford, to which they soon shifted, and where there is a hill exactly answering to his description. He next tells us, "That the horse were drawn up on the plain, at the bottom of the hill, and the chariots ran between the two armies." This seems to have been a greater and more important battle than is generally supposed; because it does not seem to be understood that there were either horses or chariots in it, though there plainly appear to have been horses on both sides, and chariots on the side of the Caledonians. The position here mentioned by Tacitus seems exactly to correspond with the nature of the ground. The Romans would form immediately after crossing the Eden, betwixt the river and the public road, as there is plenty of room for their so doing. There is a small level piece of ground on the north side of the road, upon which the horse seems to have been drawn up; and the chariots appear to have run betwixt the two armies upon the public road, as it seems to have been a public road even at that time, as will be taken notice of afterwards.

He goes on farther to inform us "That Agricola, apprehensive of being surrounded by these multitudes, widened his front, though he thereby weakened it, rejecting the advice given him of ordering the legions to advance. Then, alighting from

“ his horse, full of courage and hope, he went and  
“ headed the legions. They fought sometime with  
“ darts, the islanders being unwilling to quit the  
“ advantage of their post. Besides, their little  
“ targets and unwieldy pointless swords were not  
“ so proper for close fighting. But Agricola  
“ found means to compel them to it, by detaching  
“ two cohorts of Batavians, and as many of Tun-  
“ grians, who fell upon them sword in hand. The  
“ islanders, unused to that way of fighting, could  
“ not long withstand the charge of these warlike  
“ troops, who, pressing them with the points of  
“ their bucklers, soon broke the foremost bat-  
“ talions, and began even to ascend the hill.”

Here we have but a very garbled, meagre, and, I may add, uncandid account. He first tells us that the auxiliary foot were placed in the foremost rank to bear the brunt of the first rencontre ; then the legions were ordered to advance to support them ; and, though Agricola is said to head them in person, yet it seems both these could make no impression upon the Caledonians. “ They fought  
“ for some time with darts ;” the ground to this day gives abundant proof of the truth of this ; many of these darts, greatly wasted, are yet turned up by the plough. I picked up, also, the ulna or joint of an elbow bone, in pretty good preservation, with the joint quite entire. No wonder the Caledonians were unwilling to quit their advantageous post, being well defended in both flanks by strong ramparts of earth thrown up ; and, had

they not been insidiously enticed from it, they would have held the Romans in defiance Tacitus, however, informs us that Agricola found means to compel them to it, namely, by detaching two cohorts of Batavians, and as many Tungrians, who fell upon them sword in hand This story does by no means tell. When the auxiliaries, aided by the rest of the legions, and even headed by Agricola himself, could make no impression upon the brave Caledonians, so as to make them quit their advantageous post, can we suppose that a few heavy and unwieldy (clumsy, as they are vulgarly called) Dutchmen and Brabanters, as these Batavians and Tungrians were, could ever be able to do it? A cohort was the tenth part of a legion, viz. 600 men; sometimes, when at the fullest, they amounted to betwixt 800 and 1000, much the same as our modern regiments. Now these four cohorts, at least, could only amount to 2400; or, even supposing them at the fullest, they would only be betwixt 3 and 4000. Can it then be believed that so small a number could ever compel 30,000 brave and resolute men to relinquish such a favourable position? No; it cannot for a moment be believed. The Caledonians would soon have surrounded and destroyed such a handful of men, had they not been supported by the whole Roman army, which they are not said to have been. The plain matter of fact seems to have been, that, in order to avert the odium attached to the deed from the Romans themselves, these auxiliaries had been ordered at



last to engage, after all other attempts had failed, and to make a feint as if they had been beat ; and then, as a decoy or a lure to draw the Caledonians from their advantageous position, to counterfeit a retreat across the river, along with the whole army, which seems plainly to have had the desired effect. For, after the phrase “ compel them to it,” the scene is immediately shifted, from where the battle commenced, down to the ford on the Eden called Meralsford ; and the after description of the battle corresponds exactly with the ground. The word “ compel” seems here to have been wrong used ; it rather ought to have been, “ found means to “ allure or entice them” by artifice or stratagem, which would fully confirm what Buchanan says, that the Caledonians accused the Romans of having gained their victories by artifice and stratagem, rather than by valour. They plainly appear to have had but too just ground for the accusation in this battle ; and perhaps it was from this very circumstance that it originated. It is quite obvious, then, that the Romans had looked upon it as derogatory to the honour of the Roman name ; else Tacitus, or those from whom he derived the information, had not so industriously concealed their retreat ; even the very river he carefully conceals, and never even makes mention of it lest it should be a mean of detecting him. By how much, then, he has studiously concealed these and such other circumstances from the world, by so much has he forfeited all claim as a candid and

impartial historian. He goes on to tell us further, that “ Those who followed them, animated by their  
“ example, fought with the same bravery, and,  
“ without giving the enemy time to rally, over-  
“ threw all that withstood them. Meanwhile, the  
“ British horse began also to give ground ; and  
“ their chariots were forced to drive up the hill to  
“ assist the foot, who were in extreme disorder.  
“ Though the chariots at first somewhat daunted  
“ the Romans, yet did they but little execution  
“ by reason of the unevenness of the ground. The  
“ hill being pretty steep, the charioteers had no  
“ command of their horses, and ran without dis-  
“ tinction over friends and foes, according as they  
“ came in their way.” Here we have the most  
indubitable evidence that the ground had been  
shifted. It is said “ that the chariots somewhat  
“ daunted the Romans at first, yet did they but lit-  
“ tle execution by reason of the unevenness of the  
“ ground.” It is plain, then, that they had been  
much afraid of the chariots, and perhaps with jus-  
tice, so long as they remained where the battle  
commenced ; because there could not have been  
better ground chosen for both chariots and horses  
acting with due effect, the place not being so steep  
as the High Street of Edinburgh from the Tron  
Church to the Parliament Square ; consequently it  
could not be said to be a hill, and far less a steep  
one. But the Romans took care to draw them  
away from that favourable position, where they  
might have been formidable to them, to ground

where, by its unevenness, they could do them but little injury. There is certainly a small hill at Merals Ford which exactly answers the description given by Tacitus ; and, though now subjected to the operation of the plough for many years, it is still pretty steep ; and the course of the small brook which has cut its way through the hill being pretty deep, the chariots could not well drive across it to the east without danger of being overturned, so that the Romans would necessarily be pretty safe from them. He next informs us that “ The foot that  
“ were posted on the top of the hill, and had not yet  
“ engaged, seeing the *Romans* hotly pursuing their  
“ victory, now made a motion to surround them  
“ because of the smallness of their number. But  
“ Agricola perceiving it detached four squadrons of  
“ horse, who not only withstood the charge of the  
“ foot, but entirely routed them ; then, falling on  
“ the enemies’ flank, who were still on the plain,  
“ made great slaughter of them.” This detail not only more and more corresponds to the nature of the ground, but it even tends to solve a difficulty under which I had previously laboured, not knowing well how to account for so many dead having been burnt so far away from what I had hitherto conceived to be the field of battle. In order, however, to enable the reader to form a more distinct idea of the ground, and thereby make him the better understand the description here given, I shall endeavour to delineate it a little more particularly.

By the hill, then, that occurs so frequently in the

succinct description of this interesting battle given by Tacitus, we are only to understand a small hill or eminence not higher than the Earthen Mound betwixt the old and new town in Edinburgh, but by no means so steep. It had been originally pretty much so ; but now, by the repeated operation of the plough, it shelves more gradually on both sides towards the north and south. It also somewhat resembles the Earthen Mound in being broad and flattish on the top, extending towards the west near the whole breadth of the inclosure, above 200 yards, so that there would be room for drawing up 10,000 or 12,000 men on the top of it. This then would have been naturally a strong and tenable position, could they have had the precaution to retain it ; but, being over eager to surround the pursuing Romans, or rather to protect their flying brethren, they had too incautiously relinquished it. It will be seen, by looking at the map, that the small stream or brook, which runs along its southern base, effects a passage through it on its way to the Eden,—consequently this renders the east side very steep. There is a plain also on the north side, which coincides with Tacitus's account, stretching down from the north base of the small hill all the way to the ford on the Eden ; along the east end of which, and close by the banks of the brook, the main body and left wing of the Caledonian army had been drawn up ; and their right wing had been in the hollow and on the south side of the hill, and to the south of the brook. It appears quite obvious then that it had

been the right wing of the Caledonians which had first given way, and been pursued by the Roman left wing only, which had induced the Caledonians posted on the top of the hill to endeavour either to hem them in, or at least to interrupt the flight of their friends, and stop the further pursuit of the Romans, or to cut them off from the rest of the Roman army.

Agricola, however, perceiving this, immediately detached four squadrons of horse to attack these Caledonians, and prevent their design. This necessarily had brought on a desperate struggle betwixt the horse and foot, which appears plainly to have taken place on the south side of the brook, and on a plain to the south-west of the artificial mount, where all who fell in that bloody action appear to have been burnt on one great funeral pile. The mound is evidently artificial, and raised about four feet above the level of the brook, the earth being of a black fattish like appearance on the surface; but, if any of the stones are raised up, the earth below is the colour of burnt brick, from the intensity of the heat. The particular spot, which clearly points itself out as the one Agricola had stood on, is the eminence on the east side of where the brook has cut its passage through, as it is only on that spot that he could perceive when the right wing of the Caledonians gave way, and to have issued orders for the cavalry to follow up the advantage gained by the foot, and to prevent these from being surround-

ed by the Caledonians on the hill. From this small eminence he could have a view of the whole field of battle on both sides. It corresponds with the height of the hill on the west side, or rather a little higher. The Roman horse, after having defeated the Caledonian foot on the south side of the brook, seem to have crossed over, and to have come in at a gap or opening of the hill, where the park wall or dike is now built, and to have attacked the main body of the Caledonians on the plain, both in flank and rear, as the burning of the dead in two different places plainly points out, being at the north and south sides of the plain, as it was generally contiguous to where they fell that they had been burnt. The northmost side is a little north of where a grove of old ash trees now stands. This also corresponds with the account here given by Tacitus. However, in the description given of this battle, he shows a disposition more than once to magnify the number of the enemy, and proportionally to diminish the number of the Romans, the more conspicuously to display the talents or military prowess of his favourite hero, Agricola, in vanquishing these islanders, notwithstanding the great disparity of numbers. But, if we advert a little to the state of the Roman army, we will perhaps perceive that there was by no means such a disparity of numbers as he endeavours to make us believe. That there were three legions in it with their complement of horses, and allies or auxiliaries, there is the highest probability, with the exception

of the number which the ninth legion lost in the attack at Lochore ; as, when it was assaulted, the legions are said to have come to its assistance, which shews that there had been other two besides the ninth. It is universally allowed that a legion consisted of 6000 foot, besides the due number of cavalry, and allies or auxiliaries. In T. Livius's time, two legions, with the due number of cavalry, (*cum justo equitatu* ; Liv. x. 25,) and the allies, formed what was called a consular army, about 20,000 men,—in the time of Polybius 18,600, (Pol. vi.) There were two squadrons, or 400 cavalry, attached to every legion. Four squadrons, or 800 horse, were ordered by Agricola to attack those Caledonians who attempted to surround the pursuing Romans ; and it does not appear that it was the whole horse that was thus engaged. Had it been so, Tacitus would have taken care to inform us of it ; but it is obvious that there had been other 400, or altogether 1200 horse at least ; some even make them amount to 3000 altogether in the battle. Caesar, in his second expedition, embarked at *Portus Itius*, which is supposed to be Calais, with five legions and 2000 horse, which is just 400 to each legion. But, in order to give Tacitus full justice, we shall deduct 600 for a cohort of Usippians, that were levied in Germany, and are said by him to have deserted from the Romans the winter preceding. They had killed a Roman captain and some soldiers that were placed among them in order to discipline them, lest they

should have opposed their design. They then seized three small vessels, killed one of the pilots, and compelled the others to conduct them ; after which they set sail before their intentions could be known. They had laid their measures so ill, that they were quickly in want of provisions, and reduced to the necessity of eating some of their comrades. Those who remained alive, ignorant of the art of navigation, were driven on the coast of Friseland, and made slaves. Tacitus says that, after a strange adventure, sailing round Britain, they were first taken by the *Suevi*, and then by the *Frisii* ; and, being bought and sold, some of them at last in the course of traffic were brought to the coast where the Romans were, who told the adventure, and were afterwards famous for it. (*Tacit. Vit. Agri.*) Making this allowance then, and computing these legions according to the time of Polybius, the whole Roman army would amount to about 26,700,—or even Tacitus allows 8000 auxiliaries, besides the legionary soldiers in the four *Alæ*, and 3000 horse,—so that they appear evidently to have had a vast superiority in cavalry above the Caledonians. The Caledonian army, therefore, does not exceed them much more than 3000, exclusive of volunteers, whose numbers are not specified. Tacitus goes on finally to tell us, that “ this  
“ last action (with the cavalry) completed the  
“ victory. Galgacus, finding it impossible to re-  
“ new the fight, retreated with the remains of  
“ his troops.” This we are by no means at liberty



to believe, while circumstances are so decidedly against the truth of it. That he may have retreated from this field of battle at the ford, I question not ; but that he rallied his troops again, and renewed the fight up at the public road, after being joined by the detachment at the mill, there is the most indubitable evidence. The great number of dead who were burnt at the side of the road where the standing-stones stood, and their line of flight evidently being from that quarter, abundantly confirm this.

Lastly, he tells us that “ he (Galgacus) lost ten  
 “ thousand men in the action ; but, on the side of  
 “ the Romans, there fell but three hundred and  
 “ forty ; among whom was Aulus Atticus, cap-  
 “ tain of a cohort, who, by the heat of youth, and  
 “ the unruliness of his horse, was carried into the  
 “ midst of his enemies.”

We must also be excused from giving implicit faith to this. After the specimen he has given us, in so industriously concealing some of the most material circumstances attending the battle, because he viewed them as incompatible with the Roman arms and honour, it is quite natural to suppose that all the rest of his narrative will be of a piece ; especially when we consider the vast disproportion betwixt the losses said to be sustained on both sides. Can it be credited that 30,000 strong young men, as he acknowledges the Caledonians to have been, besides volunteers, could fight a whole day, as they seem to have done,—all of them brought into

action, and no extraordinary advantage gained over them in battle, that we can view,—and yet these to lose 10,000 of their number, and in return to kill no more than 340 of their enemies, even though these be construed to be only of genuine Romans, exclusive of auxiliaries? I am afraid that we must construe this in the way that we were wont to estimate Buonaparte's lying gasconading bulletins, by adding an O to what he acknowledged to be his losses; if he admitted the loss of 100, it was generally allowed to be 1000; if he mentioned the loss of 1000, it was safely construed to be 10,000, and so on in proportion. Mr Millar, proprietor of the ground at Meralsford, whereon the battle was principally fought, having come from London in harvest last, called upon me, and we went together to view the field of battle. He not only confirmed the account previously given of a pit full of skulls being found in his father's time, when enclosing and planting the steep bank on the Eden, but he also pointed out another place where a good number of human skulls were found beside the earthen rampart carried along the top of it. I am then more confirmed than ever that this earthen rampart had been made by the Romans, not so much to protect their flank, as was previously supposed, as the rather to divide the Caledonian troops, and prevent them getting over to the assistance of their brethren except at the expence of their head; for all those who rashly attempted to get over that rampart behoved to forfeit their head as the price of

their temerity. Hence, we may perceive that it was not so easy for the Romans to vanquish the brave Caledonians, as Tacitus, the Roman historian, affects to make us believe. No ; it required all the cunning artifices and stratagems in war that they had been master of, to be called forth, and put in practice, before they were able to conquer them. He describes this battle as though it had been decided in an hour or two at most, and also as if it had all been fought in one particular spot ; whereas, it is palpably obvious that it had been tried in four different places. It is nigh as probable that it had been obstinately contested throughout the whole of that bloody day. The Romans had only to march betwixt five and six miles from their camp at East Blair, near Lochore, when they would come in contact with the army of the associated Caledonians, consisting of Scots and Picts, under the brave Galgacus, who, Tacitus tells us, was “ *inter plures duces, virtute, et genere præstans,*” preferred to the command for his high birth and great virtue. The Romans may be supposed to have commenced their march from their camp by eight o’clock in the morning. They could easily reach the field of battle, and be ready to commence the fight by ten A. M. ; and they seem to have taken up all the rest of the day manœuvring and fighting ; for Tacitus informs us that the Caledonians escaped pursuit by the advantage of the darkness. This, however, again, does not so well comport with another sentence, “ *Postquam (in-*

“ *quit Tacitus* ) *sylvis appropinquarunt, collecta, plurimos sequentium incautos, et locorum ignaros, circumveniebant* ;” after they drew near the woods, rallying, they surprised many of their foremost pursuers who had too rashly followed them, not knowing the nature of the country. There were two cairns directly in the line of flight, that bear ample testimony to the truth of this, where those had been burnt who fell a sacrifice to their temerity. When one of these, a little east from the farm-house of Nether Pitlochry, was opened, a good many years ago, there were found several rude stone coffins full of burnt ashes, pieces of bones, some beads, &c. The beads were considerably large, of a yellowish amber, and some of a blackish colour, which I suppose had belonged as ornaments to the Romans who fell there, and were burnt and inhumed. The landlady of the neighbouring farm-house, lately made a long search for some of them for me, knowing well that they were once about the house, but to no purpose. The other cairn was west about half a mile, a little east from the house of Westfield, directly in their line of flight towards Blairhead. It is plainly evident that the Romans had pursued the flying Caledonians above a mile and a half at least ; and they appear to have been formidable even in their flight.

The skeleton formerly mentioned, which was found in a stone coffin on the side of the public road, points itself out as having been the body of “ *Aulus Atticus*, the captain of a cohort, who, through

“ the heat of youth, and the unruliness of his horse,  
 “ was carried into the midst of his enemies ” It  
 is pretty obvious that he had fallen in the last encounter at the standing stones near the road side, or rather about mid-way betwixt and the ford, as he was buried a little east on the north side of the high-way, nigh the large cairn at Wellfield. There was a tall upright stone which stood till about twenty years ago, seemingly in their line of retreat from the ford, on the lands of General Balfour, which is marked on the map ; but I am sorry, nay almost blush, to be obliged so often to repeat the demolition of all these ancient monuments, it being now gone with all the rest ; though it is highly probable that Aulus Atticus had fallen where that stone once stood, while pressing too keenly on the Caledonians in their retreat. As burning of the dead was not so universal but what there were some exceptions, particularly amongst the great, so it is pretty evident that he had been an exception. It also clearly establishes that this public road had been used as such at that early period, or ever since the country was inhabited, as the road side was a usual place where the Romans buried their dead, in order to remind the traveller of his mortality. Hence, the frequent inscriptions, “ *Siste Viator,* ” “ *Aspice Viator,* &c. on the *Via Appia et Flaminia,* &c. (Liv. vi. 36.)—(See Appendix C.)

Agricola, after this battle, is said by Tacitus to have “ marched his army back into the territories  
 “ of the Horestians, from whom he received hos-

“tages, assigning as a reason that the summer “was far spent.” This cannot be believed to be the reason, because it appears to be utterly void of truth. Instead of the summer being far spent, it seems rather not to have even begun ; it obviously appears that this was the first, and only operation, after the commencement of his seventh campaign ; and it is generally allowed that he usually opened his campaigns in the month of March, as that was wont to be the first month of the Roman year ; and was altered not long before this period by Julius Cæsar, from March to January. It appears pretty evident, then, that this great battle was fought in the month of March. Buchanan expressly says that it was in the spring. We are therefore obliged to suppose, either that the Romans had lain the most part of the ensuing summer about Edenshead and Balcanquhall, or flatly to contradict Tacitus in the account he gives, which I am not fond of doing, except when compelled to it by necessity. In order, however, to save Tacitus’s credit a little, it is highly probable, and even apparent, that they had remained a long time in or about the aforementioned place, or, at least, that it had been afterwards a Roman station. Besides the discovery of the Roman vessels previously mentioned, there was a Roman urn dug up last autumn, contiguous to it ; and also on the surface of a quarry, which was wrought on the farm last year, there was a great quantity of burnt bones found in rude stone coffins, which indicates that it had been a Roman cemetery. In-

deed, it is highly probable that Balcanquhall had been one of their stations, as it is just in such a commanding situation as they usually chose for that purpose. It comprehends not only a view of nearly all Kinrossshire round Loch Leven, and towards the west of it, but also of the whole hollow, or what is commonly called the Howe of Fife, even some miles beyond Cupar, until bounded by Kemback hill. If it were not for this object obtruding itself upon the view, it would have had a prospect of the whole of the beautiful vale, and course of the Eden, as far as the German ocean. What has a tendency the more to confirm my belief of its being a Roman station, is the discovery recently made of the little Roman town Orea, on the opposite side of the vale at the foot of the Lomond hill, about the same distance from the Eden as Balcanquhall. Now, these towns were generally, if not always, in the vicinity of a Roman station.

Another reason assigned by Tacitus why Agricola marched back into the territories of the Horrestians, besides that the summer being far spent, was, that “ he reckoned it unsafe to send his army “ to waste the enemy’s country.” Here we have him bringing out the truth at last. It is plain, to a demonstration, that Agricola had never met with such a formidable opponent as the brave Galgacus, and had got such a specimen of the obstinate valour of the hardy Caledonians, that he had deemed it unsafe to venture farther north, until he received a strong reinforcement of troops ; and, for

that purpose, he had marched back to the south of Fife,—I suppose to the two strong camps of Carnock, or rather to a camp near the hill of Dunearn, a little north from Burntisland,—where he would be near his fleet, and be able to communicate with it upon its return from the north coast, which it is said to have done toward the end of summer, and to have anchored in the port of *Trutulum*, which I conjecture to have been Burntisland, as it appears to be a natural port, and obviously of great antiquity. It is farther evident, from his taking a retrograde motion, that he had lost more men in the battle than Tacitus is candid enough to inform us. If he lost only 340, they would never have been missed, as to the military operations of an army of more than 20,000 men, besides cavalry; and he might have still proceeded in his march to still farther conquest, especially as this evidently appears to have been only at the commencement of the campaign, and he had all the summer before him; but his retreat speaks for itself, and makes it quite obvious that his losses had been much greater. Agricola is said to have “received hostages from “the Horestians.” This confirms the supposition, that Fife had been then called the country of the Horestians, which it is generally acknowledged to have been, some even including Angus and Mearns, as also having belonged to that country. As Fife belonged then to the King of the Picts, this account given by Tacitus more and more confirms my opinion, that peace had been made with the King of



the Picts immediately after the battle, as formerly adverted to, and that Agricola had demanded and received hostages from the Picts for the keeping of that peace. I likewise took notice of a Dunipacis, or Hill of Peace, that had been erected about a mile and a half east from the field of battle, as in commemoration of it. I omitted to mention in that place that there was another one of these Hills of Peace, which stood about 300 yards due west from the other one, and on the north bank of the water of Barraway. This was the least of the two; and was also unfortunately demolished a few years ago for materials to make the new road north from the town of Strathmiglo, which now passes near its northern base. The name of the park or inclosure in which it stands, or rather once stood, (as only about 10 or 12 feet of its base now remain) retains still some vestige of its original name, though sadly corrupted, being called the Peat-hill Park, a strange perversion of the word *peace* into *peat*. As there is no moss near it, from whence peats or any thing of the kind could be got, it is beyond all doubt that the Peace-hill had been its original name. Thus we see that many of our greatest antiquities are hid in obscurity, or lost. By our paying more attention to the sound than to the meaning of a name, it, through time, may be perverted as far from its primary signification or design, as the two poles are from each other. How unfortunate it is that these two noble monuments of Roman antiquity have both shared such a fate, and their

beauty entirely defaced before they were ever introduced into public notice. There is something still very remarkable about these ; and that is, that the two other *Dunipacis*, or Hills of Peace, erected on the banks of the Carron, appear to have taken their model from them, or have been erected in imitation of them, as the least of the two stands on the north bank of the river, and is also about due west from the largest in both places, and I believe seemingly much about the same distance from each other. I once crossed the Carron near the largest of the two ; and, if I remember right, it stood at a place of the river where it takes a small bend to the north, in the same manner that the largest one on the Baraway does. If, then, as I suppose, those on the Carron are in imitation of the two on the Baraway, it is obvious that the latter were the first erected, as they evidently were partly natural and partly artificial, and consequently could not be a model taken from the former, which are obviously wholly artificial. I may further remark, regarding this great and interesting battle, that a most respectable gentleman, residing in the immediate vicinity of the field of battle, who went to see the field on which the battle of Waterloo was fought, told me lately that there is a striking resemblance betwixt them ; only with this difference, that the small river Eden runs in the hollow here, and there is none at Waterloo. Whenever he saw the field of Waterloo, it put him at once in remembrance of the banks of the Eden, at the

place where, for about three miles, it gently slopes with some inequalities on both sides of the river. What is also remarkable is, that the site of the Roman town Orea, nigh the western base of the Lomond Hill, corresponds with the spot at the observatory where Bonaparte stood and viewed the battle; and the road from Orea, leading past the Orquharts across the Eden, also corresponds with the one across the field of Waterloo by La Belle Alliance to Mount St Jean, &c. It will be also perceived, by looking at the map, that the spot where the battle of Merals Ford was fought corresponds with that in which the final and tremendous struggle took place between the 42d regiment, supported by a regiment of dragoon guards and the Scots Greys, and the French Imperial Guards; so it appears that both battles were decided by a terrible charge of cavalry.

Though the Roman army marched back, after the battle, to the territories of the Horestians, it is highly probable that they returned the same way on their march northward through Strathearn; nay, it is almost certain that they did so, as this was the great road from the south to the north; and the Urbs Orea is said to be near it by Tacitus.—Oliver Cromwell's army also used this road. (See Appendix G.) A small silver coin of the Emperor Domitian, formerly alluded to, was picked up last summer on the surface of the ground in a field nigh Ledin Orquhart, seemingly in the line of march of the Romans. It is much about the size

and weight of our sixpence ; I believe, it is what is called a Roman penny in Scripture, value sevenpence halfpenny, in excellent preservation, having the head of Domitian quite entire, and his name “ Domit. Aug. Imp. &c.”—on the reverse, “ Imp. “ XXII. Con. XVI. Cen. P. P. P. ;” *i. e.* Emperor, twenty-two years Consul, sixteen times Censor, and Perpetual Father of his country. The name is quite legible around the head, and the legend belonging to his name, the corona, *i.* in as excellent preservation, as if it had been only struck a few years ago. It appears, indeed, to have been very little worn at all, previous to its being lost, I suppose, by some of the soldiers. On the reverse, there is a Roman soldier, or Mars in full armour, and in the posture of fighting, standing with his left leg nearly at full length before the right one ; his left arm stretched at full length, holding out a round shield, forming more than half a circle, which covers all the left side and shoulder. He holds a small short sword in his right hand, with his arm raised in the attitude of striking,—and with this short sword and round shield the Romans conquered the world. The right side, which is most exposed, and the left shoulder, are both covered with a coat of mail, which is yet quite visible. There is a helmet upon the head, and a peak rising from the upper and back part of the head, which juts out a little, and, hanging down, defends both the upper and back part of the head,—something resembling the tuft of black horse hair

on the back part of our dragoons' helmets. (See Appendix CC.) Although the Roman army might return back this way, there is not the least shadow of probability that ever their brave general Agricola returned with them, as this evidently appears to have been his *ne plus ultra* towards the north. Domitian being a little before this elected Emperor, in consequence of the death of his brother Titus, though he received the news of this victory with seeming satisfaction, yet inwardly repined at the reputation Agricola gained by it. His invidiously mean spirit did not suffer that hero to remain in this post, where his fame might still have gained an additional lustre. He, therefore, recalled him immediately, on pretence of promoting him to the government of Syria; but, after making the Senate decree him a statue crowned with laurel, he treacherously dispatched him by means of poison. Thus we see that the eminent services that great man had done the Empire were most ungratefully requitted by that cruel, treacherous, and unworthy Emperor.

## CHAP. V.

*The discovery of the five Roman towns Orea, Guidi, Lindum, Victoria, and Alauna ; with an account of the sacrifices to Bacchus Oreus on the hills contiguous.*

## SECT. I.—THE URBS OREA.

LET us now turn our attention to the Roman town Orea, discovered in the neighbourhood, which has been the object of the most anxious researches of the antiquary for several hundred years back. Sibbald, in his History of Fife, labours hard to find it somewhere about the Loch Ore, or water of Ore, from the resemblance the one name has to the other ; and mentions some old trenches to have been found nigh the outlet of Lochore, in support of his conjecture ; but his annotator remarks that this is too slender evidence to make good such an important subject of inquiry. He supposes it may also have been at Falkland ; others, he says, conjecture that it was at Cupar. But he comes a little more near it in mentioning this last place, as it was generally supposed to have been in Fife, and more particularly in the territories of the Ven-

nicontes. He says that the learned Mr Gordon of Straloch is clearly of opinion that the Vennicontes resided in Fife ; and it now appears that his opinion was right. We have, however, a still more sure guide to follow in this, viz. Ptolemy, from whom Mr Sibbald quotes a passage proving that this Orea was to be found in the territories of the Vennicontes. “ *Sub iis, qui magis occidentales sunt, habitant Vennicontes, in quibus est Urbs Orea.*” Sibbald’s annotator renders it thus : “ Under those “ that live more to the west, live the Vennicontes, “ in whose territories is the town Orea.” Now, in my humble opinion, this passage is by no means right translated ; for by this it would make it appear as if the Vennicontes had been slaves living under those people who live more to the west of Fife. Though I have no more of Ptolemy before me but Sibbald’s quotation from him, yet it is quite obvious that it is not people but rocks or hills that he is here describing. It is plain to me that he had been describing or speaking of the people who dwelt in the vale or strath of Eden, opposite to, or under, that long range of rocks which runs along the face of the Lomond Hill, fronting the north. He, in the next sentence, adds, “ *Vennicontes habitant*” the Vennicontes live, “ *sub iis,*” (supply *rupibus*) under those (rocks) “ *qui magis occidentales sunt,*” which have a more westerly aspect, “ *in quibus est Urbs Orea,*” amongst which, (*rupibus*, rocks, the *quibus* having a reference to the rocks in the preceding sentence)

is the town Orea. Now, this is exactly the situation in which it is found under those rocks, which assume a more westerly aspect ; and they begin to do this about the centre of the highest peak of the hill, and stretch away to the south, nearly as far as the river Leven. This also, by the bye, plainly points out to us where the Vennicontes had lived, namely, in those populous villages which stretch all along the east side of Loch Leven, and under the high rocks in the face of the Bishop Hill, comprehending also the most part of Kinross-shire. Ptolemy thus points out to us, as by an index, the situation of the foundations of the houses lately discovered, which are plainly discernible. The adjacent farm towns deriving their names from it, &c. clearly prove that this is the site of the real Roman town the Urbs Orea. It had stood directly below the steep verdant base of the western Lomond Hill, a little to the west of the highest peak or top of the hill, where it begins to subside into a plain. There is a cluster of free stone rocks which jut out from under the base of the hill close beside it, with a large perforation through the rock called the Maiden-bore, because maidens only were supposed capable of passing through it. The passage had been originally very small, yet it is now so enlarged, in consequence of so many people trying to pass, or rather to creep through it, that it will now admit the most bulky person.

The site of that ancient Roman town plainly points itself out by the foundation of every house



in it being still distinctly visible. Some of the foundations have been so deep in the earth, that they yet appear to be two, and some of them nigh three feet deep ; generally from fifteen to sixteen feet long, by twelve broad. They appear to have been built of stone without any lime or cement, as nothing of that kind can be perceived about the foundations,—resembling in that particular the temple called Arthur's Oven on the banks of the Carron. A neighbouring proprietor told me lately that, when their tofts needed any repairs, the people were accustomed to go to these ruins and take stones from them, because it was easier to get them this way than from the quarry. This consequently accounts for the stones being now all removed. The houses appear to have been vaulted over in the roof like an oven, in a manner similar to the house lately discovered at the Roman town of Lindum. Orea, though only a small town, had occupied a space of ground not less than three Scots acres ; being lately measured and ploughed since the commonity was divided. A rampart of earth had been cast up, and drawn around the town, in the form of a large parallelogram, a favourite figure of the Romans, inclosing these three acres. Nine or ten houses appear to have stood on the western rampart, parallel to one another, or all in one row. There appears to have been the same number near the middle, on a high ridge raised up artificially, in order to make their situation more dry. Two or three of the largest ones had

run across on the south side nearest the hill ; one of them thirty feet long, but divided in the middle, being a double one ; the other twenty-four feet. Other ten houses appear to have stood by themselves in a row, on the east side. The whole amounted to about thirty houses. There evidently appears to have been another house about twenty-five yards east, about half way betwixt the town and the place where they had got their water. The foundations of this house are deep in the earth, with the end of it towards the hill, betwixt two small rocks ; which I take to have been the Priest's house, as there is a small artificial green mount, square in its form, and about three or four feet high, which I suppose to have been one of the altars upon which they had sacrificed to some of their gods.

A fine mountain stream, arising about 500 feet on the hill above the town, from six or seven fountains of most excellent, cool, and limpid water, issuing from lime-stone rock, and dashing over rocks and large stones, forming some beautiful cascades, and running within fifty or sixty yards of the town, had supplied it with water. This would put the inhabitants in remembrance daily of the fine Alpine scenery they had left behind them ; especially as there was anciently a large wood of oak which ran round the bottom of the hill for about six or seven miles all the way from Falkland wood on the east, to Kinneswood on the south-west, near the east end of Loch Leven. Nothing of this an-

cient wood, originally called the wood of Gilnagad, now remains, save the wood of Drumdriel, which was lately cut, but has begun to grow again. Only one root of oak, of very large size, yet remains as a specimen, and obviously one of the *aborigines*, or original ones, about a mile west from the site of Orea. The road from the town to the place where they got their water is quite distinct, and appears to have been cut through a small artificial green mount,—I suppose for the purpose of pouring out a libation to Neptune,—near to the foresaid altar; and another artificial spot, a little raised, at the front of a small rock, forming all three a triangle, but for what purpose I am at a loss to conjecture. There has also been a small roundish building nigh the north side, and betwixt the two principal rows of houses, about sixty feet in circumference, the door of which had entered from the north-west, which I suppose to have been a temple,—perhaps to Cloacina. Other five or six houses, evidently of the same nature, and seemingly coeval with those at Orea, stood about half a mile farther east, at the foot of the hill. Though we may lament that the unhallowed plough has got into the site of Orea, yet it is in a manner owing to the circumstance of its being paired and burned previous to its being ploughed, that the town was discovered, by making the foundations of the houses appear more distinctly; as, previous to this, the heath grew so luxuriantly, as in a manner to hide these foundations; in consequence,

every year the ruins will be less discernible, as this is now the third time it has been ploughed. The western half of the ground upon which Orea stood, consisting of about an acre and a half, appears to have been once in a state of cultivation, I suppose for vegetables or garden stuffs, as there is a great contrast betwixt it and the eastern half, which seems never to have been occupied in this way. The name Orea can be easily traced in that of the adjacent farm towns, which obviously appear to have derived their original names from their contiguity to it. There are four farms immediately on the north side of it, two Upper and two Nether Orquharts, each of these having part of their lands extending to the heath or moor immediately below the town, which was formerly a common, but was lately divided. Now, it is palpably evident that their names originally had been Oreaquarts, the four towns adjacent or belonging to Orea. They, with very little variation, are still pronounced Orquarts, or more vulgarly, the Orfoots; and some even spell them Urquharts, but this is obviously a greater deviation from the original name than any of the other two. Oreaquarts then plainly appears to have been the name given them by the Romans, from the Latin word *quatuor*, four,—or rather *quartus*, the fourth part,—because each of these four towns had a part or fourth part of their farm contiguous to Orea, and also appear to have belonged to, and been cultivated by, the Oreans. The inhabitants of Orea had the precaution to cast up a

strong rampart or embankment of earth immediately above their town, where they apprehended the greatest danger from the large stones falling down from the rocks. About twelve or thirteen years ago, a very large and weighty stone, I suppose betwixt 100 and 120 tons weight, detached itself from these high rocks. A neighbouring proprietor happened just at the time to be near, and heard the first dash it gave from the rock, and observed it rolling down in the most grand and formidable manner. He said, however, that it did not move so very rapidly as one might suppose, on account of its tremendous weight sinking it so deep into the earth, leaving a track behind it like a mountain torrent.

Had the Oreans, when residing here, beheld this huge mass descending upon them with such terrific grandeur, it would have filled them with dismay, notwithstanding of their precautions, as it appeared to be making directly for the south-west corner of their town. It had at length turned upon its flattest side, and, after tossing and heaving for some time, every great plunge that it made sunk it so deep into the ground as greatly to retard its progress, and weaken its force, till at length it was so deeply ingulphed in the earth as to stop it altogether; and there it lies, about forty yards above the site of Orea, as a rude centinel to guard that pass. It has lately been split in pieces by powder, having taken twenty-seven shots to effect it.

But there is something still more remarkable a-

about Orea than any thing hitherto mentioned, and that is a curious triangular table,—or hat, as it is usually called, from its somewhat resembling a three cornered hat,—cut out of the solid freestone rock, and standing nearly as entire as when the Romans left it. It appears to have measured originally about twenty feet long by about ten broad in the centre, and about two and a half feet thick ; but there seem to have been about three or four feet broken off the southern angle, the fragments of which are lying at the foot of the steep bank below. It stands upon a pedestal of freestone rock, about twelve or thirteen feet high, fronting the west perpendicularly, and having a stalk or pillar about three and a half feet high, cut out with great labour and ingenuity, proportionally strong, to support the enormous weight of the table above ; which projects over the supporting pillar in the longest angle towards the north, about nine feet horizontally, and had done so originally as far towards the south, before the four feet had been broken off it.

It has a most curious and fantastic appearance at a distance ; and, had Butler seen it, and wished to give it a place in his Hudibras, we may suppose him to have described it thus :—

Much like unto a huge black cock,  
 So firmly perch'd upon the rock,  
 That it hath stood since days of yore,  
 Full seventeen hundred years and more ;

Being well cut out by Roman hands,  
 And as they left it so it stands,  
 A fortunate table to the sun,  
 That by it bad luck they might shun.  
 If free it still hereafter stands,  
 From idle and mischievous hands,  
 Perhaps it may resist the clime,  
 And fall coeval with old Time.

As this seems evidently to be one of the greatest Roman antiquities in the kingdom, and also as one, such as it, has been an appendage of every Roman town hitherto discovered, I shall be a little more particular in giving my opinion concerning it. It appears that such a table as this was customary amongst various idolatrous nations, and was very frequently found in the environs of various towns, from the remotest ages of antiquity. It is pretty evident that it was for conforming to this idolatrous practice, so common among their neighbours, that the Israelites of old were so severely reprimanded by the Prophet Isaiah, or rather God by the mouth of His Prophet : Chap. lxxv. 11.—“ But ye are  
 “ they that forsake the Lord, that forget my holy  
 “ mountain, that prepare a table for that troop (Le  
 “ Gad), and that furnish drink-offerings to that  
 “ number :” In the Hebrew *Le Meni* or *Meni*. Here are two names, *Gad* and *Meni*, which seem to be false heathen gods concealed under these names, to whose honour, sacrifice and drink-offerings were made. The Septuagint version of that text may

be thus rendered, "You who have forsaken me, and forgot my holy mountain, you prepare a table τῷ δαιμονίῳ for the Devil, and fill a mixture τῇ τυχῇ to fortune." The vulgar Latin thus,—*Qui ponitis fortunæ mensam, et libatis super eam,* "who set a table to fortune, and sacrifice upon it." It is a settled opinion among the Hebrews that Gad signifies good fortune, that is, the star and genius that presides over happy births. When Zilpah bare Jacob a son, Leah said "Bagad, a troop cometh." The ancient Paraphrast Jonathan and Onkelos, read, "The happy star or good fortune is come." As for Meni, some derive it from Manah, to tell or reckon, and conceive it signifies a certain number of stars, or the seven planets. Mons. Jurieu inclines to the opinion that Gad and Meni are the two geniuses who preside over generation,—the two stars which overrule natiivities; and probably these two are the sun and the moon. "The Sun is the grand principle of generation, and therefore ought to have the first place, and the Moon the next to it." To confirm this, he adduces a passage of Strabo, (Geog. lib. 12.) "That, at the city of Cabira in Armenia, there is the temple of Menis Pharnaces, to which belongs a town called Armeia, in which are many slaves, and under whose jurisdiction is a district consecrated to the temple, the revenue whereof belongs to the Priests. The Kings have so great a devotion to it, that they swear by the fortune of the King and the table of Pharnaces. 'Tis a temple

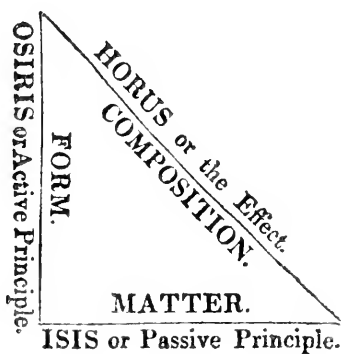


“ of the Moon, as that in Albania, and others in  
 “ Phrygia, under the very same name of the temple  
 “ of Menis.”

Now, upon this table, it is highly probable that victuals were consecrated, and offered to the geniuses worshipped in the temple, viz. the Sun and Moon. Herodotus also mentions the table of the Sun among the Ethiopians. “ Such,” says he, “ is the Table of the Sun, (Lib. iii. cap. 18.) “ There is in the suburbs a green field, covered “ every night, by the Magistrates of the town, with “ all sorts of four footed beasts roasted. When “ the Sun is up, all people are free to come and “ feast there. The inhabitants say the earth produces and yields these things continually.” The Greek word *μήνη* the moon, and *μήν* a month, are so evidently derived from Meni, that one cannot but think *μήνη*, and Meni signify the same star; and, consequently, the Meni of Isaiah is the Moon. Israel was so mad in favour of these idols as to prepare a table, and pour out mixt wine for drink-offerings to them: They would rather have pinched their families than stinted their offerings.

I am fully of opinion, then, that it was in imitation of this idolatrous practice, so common in eastern countries, that the Romans had erected this table to the sun at Orea. It is further remarkable that the shape or model of the table is that which Plato borrowed from the banks of the Nile, being an abused or corrupted notion of the Trinity, under the species of *Form*, *Matter*, and *Composition*, being a

rectangular triangle applied to the universe of things. The Platonic deity shews what was understood by it. (Obel, Pamph. l. 1. c. 6.)



It is, therefore, evident that this had been intended as a table to the sun ; as by Osiris, in the Egyptian mythology, is meant the Sun ; and this angle is directly to the south, pointing to the Sun in his meridian altitude. The other two angles are pretty entire. It is pretty evident that this table had been made entirely after the model of Plato's, which is in the form here represented. It appears also to have been the original figure of the table at Orea, before the southern angle, (the one at Osiris), fell from it, or rather had been broken off by violence, and making some allowance for what the weather has worn off it since, as it is this angle which is most exposed to the air. The perforation in the

rock near it had an allusion, I suppose, to something regarding their worship, as the rock through which it is made is about four feet thick, and rises about eight feet above it. Had it been in the time of Popery, I would have supposed it to have been made for the purpose of confession to the Priest, without being seen by him.

The proprietor has been at the trouble of cutting out a nice cove or small house in the rock immediately below the perforation or maiden bore, (See Appendix A.) with seats sufficient to contain with ease fourteen people, and a door like that of a cellar, which will admit a horse to enter and stand in the middle. I recently learned that, in ploughing the ground where Orea stood, the men lately found different fragments of urns below a causeway of round stones at the foot of the middle row of houses; but they were so brittle that they broke into fragments when taken out. There were other fragments of urns found, most of which I have procured. They are made of lime, and there is little more than the bottom of them remaining. They were thin and brittle, and their colour white in the inside, and blackish externally, by having been on the fire. One of these fragments is like our modern flower-pots both in colour and in the edges of the mouth; only this is square, and bulges out below the neck, whereas our flower pots are generally roundish in the lips, and contract gradually to the bottom. This relic may therefore be considered as an additional

evidence of this being the true site of the ancient Orea.

Every classical scholar knows that Oreus was an epithet given to Bacchus from the hills upon which sacrifices were made to him. Hence, the Oreades were styled Nymphs of the Mountains. It is quite obvious, therefore, that Orea had been so named in honour of Bacchus, being, from its contiguity to the Lomond Hill, so well adapted for worshipping him under the epithet of Bacchus Oreus. This may also account for the immense collection of stones found on the top of the hill, which is the subject of admiration to every one who sees them, where they could possibly all come from ; more especially, when it is considered that no such stones are now to be found in the vicinity, though on the east Lomond Hill some such are to be found. They seem to be a sort of stones peculiar to themselves, and sacred to Bacchus, generally of a round, heavy, hard, black, basalt stone, seemingly a species of iron stone ; and, if you strike two of them together, they have a strong sulphuric smell. Quartz too will emit a similar odour, but they are by no means of the species of quartz. The sacred circle on the top includes a space of 360 feet round the circle of stones, about two feet thick at the extremity,—placed in such a way as not to spread out or scatter,—resembling a sunk fence, and thickening and accumulating along to the centre of the top, where they appear to be betwixt 20 and 30 feet thick. Many

attempts have been made to get to the bottom of them, but they have always failed.

The 'Orean Nymphs of the Mountains appear to have been professed and zealous devotees to the worship of Bacchus. Many a heavy burden of these stones they have trudged up the hill with, little heeding, perhaps, at the time that it was difficult enough of ascent in itself, but rendered much more so by these heavy loads; their zeal for the worship of the jolly God, as he was called, had tended to make their labour comparatively light. The hill being 1350 feet in height, last time I ascended it, I found it difficult enough to do so without any burden at all; though, at the same time, I endeavoured to follow the advice of Russell, the tavern muse, to those intending to climb Ben Lomond:—

“ Oft staid my steps to taste the cordial drop ;

“ And also rested long, long on the top.”

Besides the wild and unfrequented places where the worship of Bacchus was performed more stately, there were some mountains which were more sacred and peculiarly devoted to his worship. Thus we read of different mountains where the sacred rites of Bacchus (*Bacchanalia*, *Orgia*, *vel Dionysia*) were celebrated every third year (hence called *Trieterica*) in the night time; chiefly on Cithæron and Ismenus in Bœotia; on Ismarus, Rhodope, and Edon in Thrace.

The festivals of Bacchus, called *Liberalia*, were

held on the 18th March and the 30th September, when they first drank new wine ; which festivals appear to have been carefully kept by the Oreans. The inhabitants of the other Roman towns in North Britain appear also to have been worshippers of Orean Bacchus upon the hills. Happening once to be on the top of the Pentland Hills with a party, we came upon a very large quantity of stones, though not near so great as on the Lomond Hill. They were of a pale red colour, a sort of light trap or clay slate, no doubt sacred to Bacchus, and offered to him as such, on account of their colour being that of white wine, by the inhabitants of the town of Guidi ; but this colour seems to be accidental or peculiar to this hill.

## SECT. II.—GUIDI.

The Roman town of Guidi is supposed to have stood on the east side of the public road opposite to the toll at the entrance into Morton Hall, as there were some stone coffins found when making the road. I am of opinion, however, that that was not the true site of the ancient town of Guidi, but that it stood about half a mile farther west, about mid-way betwixt the toll and the Hunter's Tryst, on the lands of Comistown, a little to the north of that large upright stone which stands on the north side of the road ; which stone obviously appears to me to have been the support of the tri-

angular table of the sun to the town of Guidi. I am the more confirmed in this from the above mentioned collection of stones offered to Bacchus being found on the hill directly opposite to this. Now, if Guidi had stood east at the toll, the inhabitants would naturally have sacrificed on the hill most contiguous to them, viz. on the east end of the Pentland Hills. Those from Edinburgh who wish to gratify more fully their curiosity in this particular, will find the collection of stones on the top of the hill south-west from the farm-town of Swanston, where, besides the beautiful and extensive view to the north, east, and south, they will also see Habbie's How up the Esk by Logan House. I rather conjecture that there had been a Roman station at or near to the entrance to Morton Hall, and that those stone coffins had been found where their cemetery had been; or perhaps it was the cemetery to the town of Guidi. The Oreads had also dealt in these red stones, which evidently appear to have been sacred to Bacchus, as I found some fragments of them about their dwellings, which had obviously been once in a fluid state, or rather in a state of fusion, of a dark red colour. There is also a kiln upon the hill, in a hollow above what I take to be the Priest's House, where there is a good deal of red stones lying about the mouth of it, though mostly covered over with rubbish above two feet deep, yet verdant on the top, obviously of great antiquity; and part of the sides

that appear are beautifully vitrified through the intensity of heat.

In all the Roman towns that have stood in this country, there is still some analogy or resemblance in the modern name to the ancient ; or, at least, the name of the town contiguous may be in some measure traced up to the original one. Guidi, indeed, of which we have just now been speaking, seems to be the only exception ; but this may be easily accounted for, as I formerly mentioned, from the most striking evidences, that it is most probable that it stood a little north of that large upright stone on the side of the road, and also a very little south from the house of Comistown. Now, as Comes, in the Latin language, signifies an Earl, also the tutor of great men's children, or the head of any school or society, though we cannot well suppose Guidi to have been the residence of an Earl, or any great man in the Emperor's train or court equivalent to an Earl in dignity, yet we can easily and very naturally suppose an eminent teacher to have resided in it, for teaching the Latin language to the youth belonging to the better sort in the country around. The British are said to have laid aside their rude and savage habits, and assumed the politeness of the Romans ; and arts and sciences, so little regarded by them before, are said to have flourished among them as much as in any other part of the Roman dominions. Before this could be attained, their language behoved also to be learned ; consequently this eminent teacher



or head of the seminary in Guidi would naturally be styled the *Comes*, by way of eminence; and, though the British might not attempt to keep up the awkward name of Guidi, yet the town might still be called the town of the Comes, or the Comestown, which it still retains. The name can by no means be derived, as some pretend to say, from Camus the Danish general; for this Danish general fell immediately after the battle of Barrie, more than 900 years after this period, in Malcolm II.'s reign, in his flight to the north, at a town or small village in Angus, named after him to perpetuate that event.

### SECT. III.—LINDUM.

THE next Roman town that presents itself is that of *Lindum*. It has been generally supposed to have stood near about Ardoch; but this appears to be a mere vague conjecture, without any other evidence in support of it than those remarkable camps which the Romans had there; but there appears never to have been even a Roman station there, far less a town. They usually chose, for the site of their towns, places singularly romantic or invitingly pleasant, none of which, I believe, is to be found about Ardoch.

There was a *Lindum*, a Roman town, in England, now the city of Lincoln, where there are yet considerable remains of Roman antiquities to be

seen ; and Cambden relates that, in this shire, at a place called Harlaxton, in the reign of Henry VIII. there was ploughed up a brazen vessel, wherein was an helmet of gold, of a very ancient fashion, beset with many precious stones. Our southern neighbours have not dealt so fair with the latter part of the name Lindum, retaining only the first part, LIN, and suppressing the latter part, the DUM, altogether, by drowning it in the river Coln, or some other which runs past that city, and substituting the *coln* in its place. Our ancient predecessors here have, however, been more faithful in retaining all the letters but one in the original name, only substituting an *n* in place of an *m*, and transposing the *i* and the *u*, which will be found in the name Lundin, namely Lundin House, in the south-east of Fife, near Largo Law, where, I believe, the true site of the ancient Lindum is to be found. Boeth. in Hist. Scot. 15, relates “ that, in the year  
“ of our salvation 1521, not far from the mouth  
“ of the river Leven, in Fife, a great many Roman  
“ coins were found by shepherds, put up in a brass  
“ vessel, some of them of gold and some of them  
“ of silver ; upon some of which was, in the face of  
“ the medal, a Janus double-faced, and on the re-  
“ verse the beak of a ship ; others of them had the  
“ face of some Roman emperor, with the legend of  
“ their name, offices, and honours about it ; and  
“ upon the reverse was the picture of Mars, Ve-  
“ nus, or Mercury, or some other idol, or the wolf  
“ suckling Romulus and Remus, or these charac-

“acters, S. P. Q. R. that is, Senatus Populusque  
 “Romanus.” Now, such as these were only found  
 in the immediate vicinity of either Roman stations  
 or towns. Sibbald also, in his History of Fife,  
 after describing the three standing stones of Lundin,  
 adds, “It is said that some ancient sepulchres  
 “have been found near to this.” Most fortunately  
 for the antiquary, one of these hitherto only  
 supposed sepulchres was discovered accidentally in  
 the year 1795. The servant of the late Mr Henderson,  
 farmer in Hatton, on the estate of Lundin, when  
 ploughing on an eminence, called Hattonlaw, little  
 more than a quarter of a mile north-east of Lundin  
 House, struck upon a stone, which a man was em-  
 ployed to take out, when, after loosing it, to his  
 utter astonishment, down it fell plump into a sub-  
 terraneous house. After making a sufficient en-  
 trance, he went down into it, and found it evident-  
 ly to have been a house once inhabited, as there  
 were several household utensils in it, though in a  
 considerable state of decay. I had heard before of  
 the discovery, but somewhat imperfectly; till lately,  
 as I was thinking upon this subject, it occurred to  
 my mind that there was a man living in my im-  
 mediate neighbourhood, who, I knew, came from that  
 quarter. I sent for him, and have often seen him  
 since, and questioned him most particularly about  
 it. Indeed, I could not have applied to a fitter  
 person, as he was, at the time it was discovered, a  
 young man living with his father, in the very next  
 house to it, and on the side of the inclosure where

it took place. and was in it mostly every day during the time it was taking down. He informed me that it was nicely arched or vaulted over like an oven, about the size of an ordinary room, built of yellowish unburnt lime-stone, without any lime or cement. He saw in it an old tea kettle of bronze of the same sort of mettle with those Roman vessels lately found at Balcanquhall. There was also the tusk and grinder of a Caledonian wild boar in which the country then abounded, the tusk about six inches long, of a beautiful yellow enamel, and the grinder so strong that the people who came to see the building, (as many came from all parts of the country to see it) called it the teeth of a lion. Some knives and forks were also found in it, pretty much wasted with rust, and a particularly large carving knife, and several other articles about which the man does not now so distinctly remember. He mentioned also that, after the rubbish was cleared away, the door entered from the south-east on the side of the hill, and the stones forming the sides of the door were very low, little higher than our common chimnies, and built of the same yellowish lime-stone with the rest of the buildings; and what was remarkable about these door-cheeks, was their being in many places very much worn down by the inhabitants who had lived in it having so often sharpened their knives upon them; so that, of the multitudes of visitors, so far were they from supposing this to be a sepulchre for the dead, as Sibbald conjectured, that they rather universally ac-

knowledgeed it to have been a habitation of the living; and that they had lived well, too, and employed their knives and forks to good purpose, or, in other words, that they had been good beef-eaters.\*

Though it may be said by some, who may be still sceptical in this, that the sole or principal evidence of the truth of it depends upon this man's single testimony, it may be replied that he is

\* As this is an epithet given to the King's yeomen of the guard, it reminds me of a pleasing anecdote concerning his late Majesty, which I heard a good many years ago when in London, and which was said to have taken place a short while before. I shall use the freedom to insert it here. King George III. happening one day to be indulging himself in a private walk with the Queen in the environs of Windsor palace, chanced to meet a fine smart little boy who had got on a suit of new clothes, of which he appeared to be very proud, as young children of his age generally are. The King, in his usual affable manner, said to him, "Well, my little boy, whom do you belong to?" The boy, well knowing who the King was, and seemingly acquainted also with the mode of addressing him, replied, "An't please your Majesty, I belong to one of his Majesty's *Beef-eaters*." The King then said to him, "If you will stoop down on your knee, I will allow you the honour of kissing her Majesty's hand." "Nay," says the boy, "I can't do that, for it would dirty all my new breeches." At which, it is added, the King laughed heartily, being so tickled with the idea of the boy preferring his new breeches to the honour of kissing her Majesty's hand, that he is said to have given the little boy half-a crown.

known to be a man of character, that would abhor lying of any kind from the heart, and far more to make or broach one of such a public nature, which could be easily detected ; more especially as by this he appeals in a manner to hundreds of people who came from all parts of the country around to see it, most of whom are still alive. For further corroboration of the truth of this, he mentions not only the man's name who took the house down (Neill Adamson), who, for any thing he knows, is still alive, but also asserts that these very stones which served as sides to the door, and were so much worn down by the sharpening of the knives, are still used as stepping-stones over a dry stone dyke in a foot-path leading from Lundin Mill up to the old Castle of Balcruivie. He thinks that this discovery was made in 1795, the year in which Lundin Mill bridge was carried away in consequence of a large tree being loosed at the roots, and brought down in the break of the storm ; and, lying across the arches of the bridge, dammed up the ice, which accumulated to such a degree, as, by its immense pressure upon the bridge, to make it give way with a tremendous crash. The whole south side of the hill or eminence in which this subterraneous house was found, called Hatton Law, seems to have been once surrounded with similar buildings, as there are great numbers of these yellow lime stones lying all around it, which seem to have been all brought from the hollow water or burn, which comes down a little east from Lundin House,

and west from this hill or law. The ground is of a very dry, soft, and sandy nature, easily dug into, and very fit for such buildings as this.

It is pretty evident that this Lindum had been posterior to the town of that name in South Britain, (so called, perhaps, from a grove of Linden or Lime Trees), and that it had received the same name from its similar situation to the southern Lindum, which is said to be a pleasant situation, built on the side of a hill, having a southern exposure, as the other has also had. The site of Northern Lindum has been betwixt two small waters, one on the east coming down from the wooded den at the old castle of Balcruivie, and the other on the west side, betwixt and the house of Lundin; and which streams, meeting in the plain below, render the situation exceeding pleasant. The cemetery appears to have been on the south-east beyond the junction of these waters, among a clump of trees, as some stone coffins and bones have been found there. But what is still further remarkable about this Lindum, and also a strong confirmation of its having been a Roman town, is, that there are three stupendous stones in the vicinity on the plain below, called the Standing Stones of Lundin; and it was formerly observed that these tables, placed in the environs of the Roman towns, were an inseparable appendage to them; so these stones obviously point themselves out as having been the supporters of the table of the sun to the town of Lindum. Though they have hitherto been sup-

posed, though without any good evidence, to have been Danish monuments; yet as nothing can be assigned as a reason or evidence in support of this but vague conjecture, we may reject it as spurious; for the battle that was fought betwixt Constantin, the Scots King, and Hubba and Horsa, the two Danish Generals, took place a far way west from this, a little west from the village of Lesslie, on both sides of the Leven, at a place named Mill Deans, or rather Danes, from this very circumstance, so that there is not the least appearance of any Danish battle having ever been fought near Lundin, which could be the cause of any Danish monument being erected here, far less such stupendous and remarkable ones as these stones are. Sibbald, in his History of Fife, mentions, that these stones are 18 feet high, and drawn with niches in the top of them, and placed in a triangular form. Now, this is in the same form and also about the same height with the table at Orea, if you measure from the foot of the rock or pedestal fronting the west on which it stands. There is a rock on the east side of equal height with it, and from which it has been once detached, from whence one can leap upon the table, if they have a steady head and nimble heels; but, if you happen to miss the small niche cut out for placing the fore foot in, down you must come at the risk of your legs, if not of your neck.

There are three circumstances that tend to confirm me fully in the opinion that these Standing



Stones of Lundin, as they are called, have been originally the supports of the table to the sun to the inhabitants of Lindum ; first, their being placed in the form of a triangle ; next, that there are niches or recesses cut out pretty deep, and also so far back into the top of the two broadest headed ones, which are obviously intended for supporting a great weight, and the south angle of the table would rest on, and project over the stone placed in the southern angle ; and, lastly, these stones are directly to the south of the ancient site of Lindum. So far as I can now recollect, from having seen them some considerable time ago, they also are placed the same way as the table at Orea with the two longest angles pointing directly south and north, and plainly appear to have once supported a weighty stone table which now apparently lies in fragments at their feet. If the town had stood down in the plain, the altitude of the table would have been considerably above the houses, whereas, by being built up on the side of the hill, or rising ground above the plain, the height of the table would be corresponding to the elevation of the town. There is then a query which very naturally occurs here, whom are we to blame as being most likely guilty of having demolished such noble monuments of Roman antiquity ? I am fully of opinion, that we must join with Buchanan, who flatly accuses Edward I. King of England, of having not only taken away, (or rather purloined, for he had no more just right to do this, than he had to usurp

the throne of the kingdom,) the upper lintel of the door of the Roman temple which stood on the banks of the Carron, wherein the name of the builder of the work is thought to have been inscribed, but also of having burned the ancient records of the kingdom, and invidiously defacing all the rest of the old Scottish monuments, both of independence and antiquity. This monument, obviously one of the most noble and conspicuous of Roman antiquity to be found in the island, would necessarily be amongst the first to feel the effects of his destructive and dilapidating rage. We cannot for a moment suppose that the natives would ever be guilty of such an outrage against taste and national feeling as to cover this Roman town with rubbish, in order for ever to conceal it from human view, or to break down and deface the table in such a manner that even conjecture itself has been at a loss what to make of it. No! they would rather have felt proud to have had such noble and ancient monuments to boast of. It seems, however, that Edward took care that we should have as few of these remaining as he possibly could make, though it was certainly no very Royal-like action, but invidiously mean in the extreme, in a King, to go about industriously seeking for all these monuments, either of antiquity or independence, and ordering them immediately to be demolished. It is very fortunate, however, that the table at Orea, by its sequestered situation, has escaped his dilapidating hands, as it has been so

useful as a key to find out the rest. Though Edward's system seems to have been carried on with the view of weakening their ideas of national independence, yet these principles were too deeply rooted for him ever to be able to eradicate. He might sooner have exterminated them as a nation, which he, indeed, from a principle of deadly hate and implacable resentment, previously threatened to do, because, forsooth, they dared to assert their just rights, and attempted to set bounds to his lawless and inordinate ambition. He had actually advanced nigh the very borders of the kingdom in order to put his impious threats of utter extirpation into execution; but he was not allowed to enter, being suddenly arrested by the strong arm of death; and, breathing his last in a small paltry hut, was sent to give in his account to a higher tribunal, where justice is administered without respect of persons. But for this duty he seemed to be but ill prepared, if we may judge from that spirit of mind in which he left the world; for, instead of shewing any remorse of conscience for the many unjust oppressions exercised towards this highly injured nation, or exhibiting any signs of repentance for the cruel, unjust, and barbarous treatment of many of the nobles who fell into his hands, he left the world strictly enjoining his son, with his dying breath, to carry his threats of extermination into execution. But thanks to an all-protecting Providence, and the brave and independent spirit of our ancestors, this he never was

able to accomplish. Indeed, had there been nothing more that we could justly accuse him of than his most barbarous and unjust treatment of the brave and heroic Wallace, this of itself would have been sufficient to leave an indelible stigma both upon his reign and his memory.

Though we may justly lament that this, with other noble monuments of Roman antiquity, have been destroyed, and the ruins so long concealed from view, yet it affords us some small consolation that this one can be restored to its original appearance; and the opulent proprietor, Sir James Erskine of Torry, on whose ground it stands, may be proud in having such a noble piece of antiquity standing on his property, and feel much gratified in having it in his power to restore it to its pristine state,—not, it is hoped, for the same idolatrous purposes for which it was originally erected,—but only to let us see it in its original state of stupendous grandeur. It is truly a great pity that the house found at Lindum was ever demolished, as it would have served as a specimen or model for judging of the rest by, both there and at the other Roman towns. Though, strictly speaking, the identical table cannot be restored, as it appears to be now lying in fragments at the foot of the pillars, yet a substitute may be easily found, as broad stones or flags can be got of any size from the beach a little to the south, from whence these obviously have been taken. This, indeed, cannot well be supposed to please the too fastidi-

ous antiquary equally well as the original one; but, when it is considered that these are the very same pillars which were originally placed there by the hands of the Romans, which have now stood seventeen hundred years, and also supported, as we may suppose, that horizontal table or covering for twelve centuries at least, we may be well reconciled to see it thus far restored to its primitive state, and be thankful that matters are not worse. If thus restored in proper time, it might even be deemed worthy of a visit from royalty itself, when viewing the rest of the country. By the aid of a good glass, it could be perfectly discernible from the Calton Hill of Edinburgh, and even might, by a small alteration, I presume, be brought within the verge of the Camera Obscura in the New Astronomical Observatory.

Sir R. Sibbald is of opinion that there had been a Roman station somewhere about the mouth of the river Leven, or the town of that name a little to the westward of this. My opinion, however, is, that there had been one above that a few miles, or rather one of those strong fortresses which are said to have been built between the friths at that remarkable place, below Kennoway, called in the country the Maiden Castle, and by Boethius, *Arx Septentrionalis*. This is just in such a situation as they usually chose for their stations or fortresses, having a fine commanding view to the south and the country around, and for guarding the road from the south. It appears to have been a very ancient

and strong work, mostly artificial, but partly natural. The trenches are still distinctly perceived around it, being also upon the farm called Duniface.

The battle, at that place, appears to have been fought a little to the south west, on the banks of the Leven; for, when making a new lead a few years ago at the Milntown of Balgonie, the workmen found a great many old darts, rusty swords, spear heads, and other warlike weapons, upon the plain on the north bank of the Leven, a little east of Balgonie Old Castle. The late Earl of Leven got possession of all these relics, among which there is a Roman sword of brass or bronze in good preservation. This obviously appears to have been a battle fought with the Romans; and a peace seems to have been patched up immediately after, when this Dunipacis would be made in confirmation of it, and the town of Lindum then founded. This would be just in the same manner as a peace had been made with the Pictish King after the battle of Meralsford, or the Lomond Hill, and the town of Orea had been founded immediately after it. The Pictish Kings had always taken care to insure a peace immediately after a defeat, whatever should come of their northern neighbours, who disdained submission, or to enter into any compromise whatever with the Romans. After the battle of the Lomond Hill, or Meralsford, all that part of the island lying south of the two friths,—that is, the Forth and Tay,—was reduced to a Roman province. The Romans are said to have left the northern parts to the inhabitants as a wild

uncultivated country, not worth the keeping, though there are some as fertile spots be-north the Tay as are to be found in all North Briton. But I doubt we must apply the fable of the fox and the sour plumbs here, and suppose that they were not able to take and keep it, for they certainly did make the attempt; as will be seen afterwards.

It is said by Tacitus that strong garrisons were placed in the fortresses built on this side the friths, or south of the Tay; for the Romans never had any footing be-north that river. Even many of the Britons and southern Picts chose rather to lose their possessions, and retire into the north amongst the Scots, and the northern Picts, or those beyond the Tay, in Angus and Mearns, than live under the Roman yoke. These were the men who, joining with those who afforded them refuge, made continual war with the Romans, in maintenance of that precious liberty their unhappy country had lost. They spared not even those of their own countrymen, whom they looked upon with horror for submitting with pleasure to their slavery. These, too, were the men who, along with the more northern Picts and brave Scots, obliged Emperors themselves to come over in person and oppose the effects of their invincible courage.

## SECT. IV.—VICTORIA.

THE next Roman town, which in course requires to be elucidated, is *Victoria*. This town has all along been supposed to have stood somewhere about Perth, though the real site has never, so far as I have heard, been condescended upon by any. With those who suppose that it stood near to the town of Perth I agree; and I shall also venture to give my humble opinion as to its true situation. It is quite obvious that the town had been so named in honour of the goddess Victoria, after some victory obtained over the Caledonians. The victory which naturally suggests itself as having been gained is that at Meralsford, or, as Tacitus erroneously styles it, Mons Grampius, instead of Mons Lomundus. Some again may start this difficulty, and say that, as Orea is supposed to have been founded immediately after the battle of Meralsford, it was most natural that it should have had the name of Victoria, rather than Orea. To this it may be replied that the situation of Orea was so inviting for worshipping Bacchus, under the epithet of Bacchus Oreus, on account of its immediate vicinity to the Mons Lomundus, that they might despair of ever finding a more appropriate situation; and, supposing that any situation might serve for Victoria, it had been named Orea in honour of Bacchus, resolving to call the next town Victoria in honour of the victory.



Accordingly, when they marched forward in sight of Perth, and found an inviting situation, they had carried their purpose into execution, and founded a town in honour of the goddess Victoria. The particular spot where this ancient town once stood, in my humble opinion, is a little east from the public road, at the farm town now called Tor-sappie. From this the view is delightful, comprehending the town of Bertha, with the beautiful and verdant Campus Martius, now called the North and South Inches, with the majestic Tava rolling its ample waters close by them, and dividing a little above into two streams, and forming a beautiful and fertile island, just opposite to the town now called Friartown island. After having scooped out a noble passage through the chain of hills, the river glides, a little out of sight, with the most picturesque and precipitous rocks of Kinnoul on the opposite banks, constituting a fine trait in the landscape; the Gram-pian mountains rising in sublimity at a proper distance, and forming a grand back ground to the whole, blending the sublime and beautiful most happily together, and forming one of the finest views any where to be found.

After Agricola's departure from Britain, we have but an imperfect account of what passed in the island till the reign of Adrian; so that there is a gap of about thirty years, namely, from the year 85 to 117, during which, it is supposed the Romans lost much of their conquests here. We only know that, during that period, *Salustius Lucullus* was sent

hither by Domitian, to whose suspicions or jealousy he quickly fell a sacrifice. We also learn that one *Appius Junius Sabinus* was one of the then reigning consuls; and, as their authority was supreme in time of war, there is every appearance of probability that he was sent by Domitian to recal the brave Agricola, as it was only his authority, being above that of a general, which could well do so,—and that this Appius had remained. There is every appearance that he succeeded Sallustius Lucullus; and it is apparent that it had been by him, or under his auspices, that the town of Victoria was founded; as by a little attention we will trace his name, along with that of Victoria the Goddess, named upon the town. There are two farm towns very nigh one another, of the name of Torsappie Easter and Wester, so it is highly probable there had been two small towns of the name of Victoria. They had been by the Romans called the *Victoriae Appii*, or Appius. The natives might for a time aim at pronouncing them in this manner, but through time, or after the departure of the Romans, as the natives were famous for contractions or abbreviations, the first syllable of the name, *Vic*, would be left out, or relinquished as untenable; they would then pronounce them the *Torias Appii*, and at length it would quickly degenerate into the Torsappies, the name they still retain.

We read of the *Via Appii*, the Appian way, and the *Appii Forum*, a town near Rome, mentioned by the Apostle Paul in his journey to Rome, Acts,

xxviii. 15. and here we have the *Victoriae Appii*, though evidently a different man from the former, as there were many eminent men of the name of Appius. It is pretty evident then that this Appius and the goddess Victoria had shared the honours betwixt them. I am the more confirmed in this conjecture from an upright stone still standing on the eminence a little below the farm of Wester Torsappie, which seems to have been the pillar or support of the fortunate Table of the Sun, to the two towns called Victoria, which appear to have stood on the plain below. This also points out the true site of the Victorias, viz. that the principal town of the two had been directly north from that stone, a little farther down, and on the west side of that small rippling stream which joins the Tay, and had supplied the Victorias with water. This stone is not so high as any of the other three ; but it did not require to be so, as the towns were considerably lower.

The Victorians seem also to have been worshippers of Bacchus Oreus, though by no means to such an extent as the Oreans themselves ; for there is a considerable circle of stones yet remaining on the highest top of Moncrieff Hill, or rather the Hill of Moredun, directly above the house of Moncrieff, which hill would be most contiguous to the town. Although I never was on the top of Largo Law, the hill most contiguous to Lindum, yet there is no doubt but that the inhabitants had sacrificed there

to Orean Bacchus as well as at the rest of the Roman towns.

#### SECT. V.—ALAUNA.

THE only Roman town in North Britain which remains to be now discussed, is Alauna; and though it is the first in alphabetical order, yet it is the last of being taken notice of, on account of its being more out of the way. As I hope then we have ascertained all the rest, so I have not the least doubt but we shall find it out also. It has been generally supposed that it stood at Alloa; but this I can by no means agree to. There is not the least shadow of probability that ever it stood there, but rather at the little town or village of Bridge of Allan, north from Stirling, and a little above where the water of that name joins the Forth. There is a river in Northumberland much of the same name, but a little differently spelled, the Aln, upon which the town of Alnwick stands. Now, the Latin name of that river is the Alaunus, the very name we are in search of, only a masculine termination *us*, to a river, whereas it is *a*, feminine, for a town. It is quite obvious, then, that the town had stood at Bridge of Allan; and if there be an upright stone still standing thereabouts, as no doubt there either is, or has been, we may be assured that the town had stood directly north, and in sight of this stone. It would also be in the vicinity of Keir, where the Roman station

had undoubtedly been ; and likewise the inhabitants would have an opportunity of worshipping Oread Bacchus on the west end of the Ochil hills, immediately contiguous. Perhaps the name should be Ochils, as it seems to be a corruption of oak hills.

The Lomond hill, however, had been, like a Rhodope or Cithæron, above all the rest, more eminently devoted to the worship of Bacchus Oreus ; and, being in a manner central, would be easily seen from each of the other hills on which he was worshipped by the rest of the towns. If the Oreans lighted a fire upon it at night, it would be distinctly seen by the Lindumians from Largo Law, by the Guidians from the Pentland hills, by the Alaudians from Dunmyat, so famed for its fine view nigh the west end of the Ochils, and by the Victorians from the top of Moredun. As it was generally in the night time that the sacred rites of Bacchus were celebrated every third year, called Trieterica, they would no doubt have artificial lights with them ; and I think it probable that delegates from each of the other towns would be sent to assist at the ceremonies on the Lomond hill, being so eminently fitted for it from its central situation, shape, &c. Hence, the immense number of stones found on it, being devoted to his worship more particularly than any of the other hills. It is highly probable that this Appius Junius Sabinus, the consul, who seems to have founded Victoria, had also fought the battle with Galgacus in Stormont, in which he plainly appears to have been defeated by the latter, and ob-

liged to fly east through Angus and Mearns. As history fails us as to who succeeded Salustius Lucullus, leaving us barely to conjecture, to him also we must ascribe the erecting of the camps at Ardoch and at Strageth, &c. as it is perfectly obvious, to every attentive observer, that Agricola was recalled a considerable time before this. The two single camps near Comrie seem also to have been formed by Appianus evidently with the view of bringing the brave Galgacus to an engagement, as these are styled, in an old map of Scotland now in my custody, a *Galgachan*, obviously having a reference to him, and made previous to that engagement. The Romans plainly appear to have been so keen to bring him to this, or at any rate to reach him, if possible, that they seem to have gone north by the west ends both of Loch Earn and of Loch Tay, and reached as far as the banks of the river Lyon, near the Kirk of Fortingale, as there is one of their camps to be found there, obviously erected with a view to head the Tay, and get down the east side towards Dunkeld, the capital of the Caledonians. After reaching thus far, however, they would perceive that the river Tummel, augmented by the Tilt, the Garry, and Bruar, was considerably larger than the Tay, and for this reason, and also on account of the lofty and impassable mountains, they had viewed the passage that way utterly impracticable, and had returned, crossing the Tay near about Perth, and taken a nearer way to get at the enemy's capital,

which they at length effected after crossing the Isla, and had thus brought on the battle.

Having lately seen a young clergyman who is well acquainted with that country, he told me that there are only two particular passes leading from where the camp is, one to the east, and another to the north ; but that there are yet to be seen distinctly the vestiges of three camps upon the top of the hills overlooking these passes, wherein the hardy mountaineers seem to have been stationed in order to dispute the passage of the Romans. The latter would then see it to be certain destruction to force their way in face of such opposition ; and this would cause them measure back their steps again by the west end of Loch Tay, which, I am told by this clergyman, who appears to be an intelligent young man, is of unfathomable depth. About 60 years ago, while a boat was crossing from the north to the south side, on the evening of a fair that was held through the day on the north bank of the lake, the people being eager to get home to their houses, had rushed in, and rather overloaded it, though it kept on the surface till near the south side, when down it sunk all in an instant, like a stone, and neither the boat nor any one of the people, amounting in all to about 60, were ever seen or heard of again ! A line was procured three miles long, and by it the lake was sounded, but it could by no means reach the bottom ! Extraordinary phenomena were observed in it about the great earthquake at Lisbon in 1755 ;

and many remarkable ebbings and flowings have been observed at different times since.

Horsley observes that, in the old language of the country, the word Blair signifies a place of battle, or *locus pugnae*. With him I so far agree, only with this difference, that Blair is not the very *locus pugnae*, or the spot where the battle is fought, but rather the environs of the field of battle, where the troops had rendezvoused before, and assembled after the battle. It is very observable that, in all the three different places where these Roman battles had been fought, at Lochore, at Meralsford, and at Stormont, the name of Blair occurs; and the place so called is in all three very near the field of battle. At Lochore there is Blair, or East Blair, and Blair-Adam at a little distance; a little to the west of where the battle commenced at Meralsford, or the Lomond Hill, there is Blair Strowie, Blair-nathort, and Blairhead; and in Stormont, in the parish of Kinloch, where the third battle was fought, there is Blair, Ardblair, and Blairgowrie, at a little distance. But to state the similarity more particularly betwixt Meralsford and Stormont, there are also two other towns at each of these places, which obviously appear to have derived their names from circumstances connected with the battles. There is a small village at each of these places of the name of Pittendreich, at the same point at angles, where the Romans would march straight forward till they came near about these places, when they behoved to turn to the



right at the Lomond hill, but to the left at Stomont. There is also a farm town at each of these of the name of *Maas* or *Maaz*, where a corps of observation appears to have been placed for taking particular notice of the march of the Romans, both of them well calculated for the purpose of bringing in as early intelligence as possible to the main army. The Caledonian troops, from the north and south-west of Fife, had rendezvoused at Blair Nathort; those from the north in Perthshire and Strathearn, had assembled at Blair Stowie, and, as I suppose, collected again after the battle at Blairhead, as their line of flight appears to have been directed that way. After meeting at the two former places, they would unite at the point of the triangle, about half a mile west of where the battle commenced, at a town called from the circumstance *Cuthil Gourdie*, signifying a collection or gathering together of strong men; which words are both still in use. The word *Cuthil* is applied to a quantity of corn, when it is taken out of a place where it has not much air to dry it, and stooked up thick on the ground, where it has more free air. Any piece of ground also that turns well out, and in which the stooks or shooks of corn stood thick after being reaped, is said to be like a *Cuthil*. A powerful well-made or able-bodied man is said also sometimes to be a thick or a strong *gourdie* or *gurdie* man, which is a sort of redundancy, because both words signify the same thing. The farm of *Maas*, near the Lomond hill, is considerably west from

the field of battle, on the south side of the public road opposite to the east end of Loch Leven, and on an eminence near it, well adapted for observing the Romans coming along the east side of Loch Leven. There have been till lately three or four parallel trenches pretty deep, one of which still remains, with an appearance of a small roundish camp, where, probably, a body of Caledonians had been stationed for observing the motions of the enemy, and bringing early intelligence to the main army, about two miles east, which was encamped on the eminence above where the battle commenced ; the vestiges or ramparts of which are still remaining. The Romans could march nearly straight forward till they came to Pittendreich, (See App. E.) and then they behoved to turn either up by Maaz\* to the left hand, or east by Gospe-

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\* Maas. There is a game at which children at school, both in Abernethy and the north of Fife, amuse themselves, called "All the Wild Birds of the Air;" and the one who takes the most active part in it is called Maus. Let us attend to the word a little, and see if we can learn what is meant by it, as often the greatest antiquities are handed down by these simple and natural amusements. Perhaps this very name may be derived from these battles, or may have an allusion to them. The way in which the game is played is this : All those intending to join in it, generally to the number of a dozen or so, sit down in a row. One superintends the game, and goes along the line, asking what name each chooses to adopt, which may be that of any bird they please, only they must be different from each other ; and he must remember

tries to the right, as there was a morass before them, which would prevent their march forward.

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them all. The one who is to act Maaz stands in sight, and is allowed to make particular observation by the eye, but not to be within hearing. Whenever all their names are agreed upon, then he is called in; and the superintendant proceeds by asking him to guess 'im out, guess 'im out, (which is the phrase used, and twice repeated), the Black-bird, by looking generally in a contrary direction from where the real representative of that bird sits, the more to deceive Maaz, as it must be all guess work to him. If he does not guess aright, he gets a stroke, or, to keep by the more ancient word, a baff on the back; and he is not allowed to guess it a second time, but proceeds to another one, guess 'im out, guess 'im out, the Linnet, Robin Redbreast, &c. and if he guesses right, he gets the bird away on his back as his prize or reward, until the whole be gone over. Now, in regard to the Caledonians, those who acted Maaz, or took observation, in order to bring in intelligence, had been entirely observers or guessers by the eye; and if they hit on the right line of march that the Romans took, and so brought in early intelligence, then they would be rewarded or promoted, which is represented in this game by Maaz getting away the bird as his prize for guessing right; and, in like manner, if they brought in wrong intelligence, then they would be punished or degraded, which is represented by Maaz getting a baff on the back for not guessing right. Little are children aware that, by these simple games, they are handing down some of the most ancient events of antiquity.

There is another game, which more grown up boys play at, that had taken its origin from, or been in imitation of, the bickerings and skirmishes betwixt the Scotch and English borderers in their making incursions upon one another. The boys are divided into two sides, representing the Eng-

By the time they reached Pittendreich, these Maaz or observers could carry the intelligence for certainty to the main army of Caledonians as to the line of the Roman march. After they had turned to the right hand at Pittendreich, a little east upon the farm of Wester Gospetrie, the Roman cavalry, as I take it, had left a great number of military weapons, about 40 in number, which were turned up by the ploughing at the side of a large stone in a wettish bog, or perhaps they had left them in their return south after the battle. They consisted of some darts of different figures and sizes, spear-heads, &c. ; but the greatest number consisted of short bronze figures or battle axes, like the mouths of weapons of four, five, six, and eight inches long, made hollow, or with a hose, intended evidently for being fixed in a wooden handle or shaft, about an inch and a half diameter, with a strong eye or loop emerging from the side for securing it in the shaft.

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lish and Scotch, and are so denominated ; and, if they are taken prisoners by coming beyond the line of march mutually settled on, then they are bound in honour, as the borderers were upon their parole, not to go over to their own side unless relieved by some one of their party coming over and touching them ; but in doing this the liberators are apt to be taken prisoners themselves, &c.

Another game also is played at in Abernethy, evidently of great antiquity, and appearing to have originated at the early period when the Pictish Kings had their Courts there, as the game has frequently a reference to the King and his Court, which certainly must be understood of the Pictish Kings, as no other Kings but these were ever residing there.

They have also a sharp convex edge or mouth about three inches broad, but some of them now somewhat corroded by the verdigrease by lying so long in the damp earth. I have procured three of these, one of them still very sharp in the edge ; and also a spear-head a little injured. Exact drawings of three of these are given in the plan. Any idea I can form of them is, that they had been used by the cavalry for striking straight forward in the face or forehead, as one stroke in the forehead from one of them would effectually kill a man. They are unquestionably of Roman antiquity, being all of them bronze, the metal peculiar to the Romans. These, taken together with the discoveries formerly mentioned, tend in the most indubitable manner to prove that this was the place where the battle was fought betwixt Agricola and Galgacus, which is attempted to be described as such by Tacitus, though he has mistaken the name. Nay, I am now as fully convinced of this as I am that ever the Romans were even in Britain at all, and this I never entertained a doubt of.

There is also a small village called Pittendriech, about three miles on this side of where the battle was fought in Stormont. The Romans, after crossing the river Isla, behoved to march straight forward till they came to it ; and then turned to the left hand, as the loch of Marlee or Drumelly lay straight before them. This the corps of observation, which no doubt would be stationed at Maas, (See App. G.) a place well adapted for observing the line of their march, being on the height above Blairgowrie,

would pay particular attention to, and be ready to carry the intelligence to the main army, along the hill of Ard Blair, whenever the Romans reached Pittendreich.

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## CHAP. VI.

*An attempt to point out the Site of the Pictish King's Palace at Abernethy, &c. and to explain the use and design of the Round Tower, with other Antiquities connected with the place.*

THE Romans, after settling matters in the south of Fife, had evidently taken their departure from that quarter, which was the great thoroughfare towards the north, in order to proceed on their route in that direction ; but it was impossible they could get down through the opening in the nearest line which the new road has effected ; for, before the road was made by the tract of Balvaird water, it was so narrow and rugged, and the banks of the stream so steep, that in some parts a man could scarcely have walked upon it ; and the water crosses and re-crosses the road no less than seven times before it gets down to the Farg, which also, before the new road was

made along its eastern banks, admitted little or no room beside the magnificent and beautiful passage it had scooped out for itself through the range of high hills in the neighbourhood. The march of the Romans clearly points out itself. They seem to have commenced from the general's tent, then to have marched towards the north-east,—to have crossed the small burn in the hollow, where the little town of Hole Mill now stands,—to have advanced through the farm of Corinzion, still keeping in a direct line north-east behind the farm-house of Leden Urquhart,—and to have proceeded still in that direction towards a high rock at the head of the glen of Abernethy, called the Craig of Pittenbroigh, rather more than two miles in a straight line from where they last commenced their route. By marching down that hollow they would come immediately into the beautiful and fertile vale of Strathearn, and upon Abernethy, at that time the capital of the Pictish King, as also the place of his residence. But where this particular spot is, or where the site of his palace was, seems to be wrapped up in mystery. It is universally agreed, that Abernethy was the place of their residence for many hundred years, and that the Picts existed as a nation many centuries before the Christian era, and also before we have any mention of the Scots; for we read of Mainus, the son of Fergus the first King of Scotland, marrying the Pictish king's daughter. Now this is said to have happened about 300 years before the birth of our Saviour. As I am well ac-

quainted with that town and country, there are no ruins about the town, or in the plain in the immediate neighbourhood, which are mentioned as the remains of the Pictish Kings' palace. Now, it is something very extraordinary, that neither the place where they resided when living, nor yet the spot where their ashes repose when dead, have ever yet been attempted to be pointed out. Suspending then the march of the Romans for a little, I shall endeavour to investigate this subject as they pass by ; and in this I am not a little assisted by the tradition of the place ; for though there is often much fiction blended with the truth, yet there is always something of truth upon which any story so long kept up is founded. There is a tradition that, upon a pretty high hill about a mile to the south-west of that town, called the Castle Law, in one of the three lochs or small round lakes upon the top of it, there is a golden cradle hid, in which the king's children were wont to be rocked. Now, if this palace had been at the town, upon any sudden invasion or particular emergency, it would have been far more natural and easy to hide the cradle by digging a hole in the earth and concealing it there, than carrying it so far, and up a hill too, and concealing it in one of the lochs. But this points out to us, that the king's residence behaved to be somewhere adjacent ; and here again we are not altogether left to conjecture, for, on the eastern summit of that hill there are large ruins of some ancient building which had stood at some



very remote period, as it now appears like a large cairn, with the grass growing through the mass of stones. The last time I was at it, about four years ago, I perceived a piece of the wall still remaining, which had extended from the north-west side of the green hill, down towards the side of what had once been a small shallow lake, but is now a morass, by a cut made to let out the waters on the very brink of the hill. Its general appearance seems to be only a mass of small stones, because all the larger ones have been carried away. A good many hewn stones were lately dug out of these ruins; and a mason in Abernethy told me lately, that many a fine stone he has dug out of the ruins, and rolled down the hill towards the public road that skirts its base on the east and north. It is quite plain that this place had never been intended to resist fire-arms; for it is evident that it must have been in ruins long before the invention of gunpowder.

It appears clear to me, that this had been the residence of the Pictish race of kings, and had been called the Castle, which is a far more ancient term than that of Palace; and that the hill of Castlelaw had derived its name from it. There had been a rampart of earth thrown up to guard the pass a little below, and force the enemy to go round to the back of the hill. Indeed, a more beautiful and commanding situation than this can scarce be found. Abernethy would appear immediately below it toward the north-east, stretching more than a mile and

a half in length east and west, before it was burnt down by Kenneth II. about the middle of the ninth century. Lower Strathearn appears immediately at the foot of it, extended like a beautiful map, the effect being very much heightened by the two beautiful and noble rivers, the Earn and Tay, meeting together a little below, with the fertile district of the Carse of Gowrie adjacent. Towards the north-west and west, you behold Ben Ledi and Ben Voirlich rearing their lofty summits above the rest. A little to the north you see the grand pass or gap the Earn has forced for itself through the lofty Grampians at Comrie; looking across Upper Strathern, you view the river about twelve or fourteen miles distant coming down towards Lower Strathearn, where it forms itself into many beautiful serpentine meanders, including sometimes a whole farm in one of its curves, as in the farm of Wester Rhynd, opposite and near to which it joins the Tay. Looking towards the north, you perceive the grand pass of the Tay at Dunkeld through these lofty barriers of nature, the Grampians sublimely rearing their majestic heads, nearly as far east as where they subside a little west from Stonehaven, and forming a fine back-ground behind the ridge of the Sidlaw Hills above the Carse of Gowrie. Were Perth only visible here, with the majestic Tay sweeping past it, and its beautiful environs, there would not be a view equal to it in all Great Britain. But the top of Moredun intervenes and conceals what would be a great addition to the view. Even as it is, a

late tourist, who had been through the most of England, and also through France and other parts of the Continent, decidedly gives the preference to Lower Strathearn, and the Carse of Gowrie adjoining, for beauty. The view, I think, appears to best advantage from the top of this hill, as nearly opposite it the mighty Tay pushes itself into view all at once, without letting us perceive any gap or opening for it to come through; because it issues from the east and west, behind Moredun or Moncrieff Hill. One would think it was connected with the hill of Kinnoul, and as one continued chain of the Sidlaw Hills; but whenever it has got through the grand pass, it immediately makes a fine bend toward the south-east, and has much the appearance of a noble subterraneous river, as it were, emerging from under the precipitous and rocky front of the hill of Kinnoul,—which has a fine effect. Whenever the eye catches a view of this noble river, it in a manner arrests the attention, so that we are obliged to follow it all the rest of its progress till it reaches the German Ocean, where the view is extended as far as the eye can have any distinct vision, even the length of Redhead beyond Arbroath. About twenty miles down, the beautiful town of Dundee attracts the attention, spread out on its northern bank to great advantage, surmounted by the beautiful green hill called the Law or Bonnet Hill, from which the street next it is denominated the Bonnet Hill; and from which hill, I am fully of opinion, the town had been ori-

ginally named Dun-Tay, the Hill of Tay,—and not Dei-donum; all which places are distinctly seen from this spot; and, a little below, the castle of Broughty, standing like a watchful centinel guarding the narrow pass of the estuary of the Tay; and, if I mistake not, the light-house of Barrie is also perceived a little farther to the eastward.

About three hundred feet farther down on the north side of Castle-Law, there seems to have been some other building erected upon a large knoll or eminence, arising from a large shelf of the hill, which would no doubt belong to the royal establishment also; there is no part of it now remaining but a mass of small stones. At this early period, the kings seem to have had a decided preference to eminences for building on, as the royal residence of the Pictish Kings at Forteviot, which was for many hundred years after occasionally their place of residence as well as Abernethy.

There are no vestiges or ruins near Forteviot any way answerable to the ruins of the Pictish kings' residence there, except a small eminence on the right bank of the water of May, which the river has nearly undermined, and which appears to have been a small round fort, from which the place had apparently taken its name. It stands on the side of a small plot of ground, called the *Millars Acre*, upon which Baliol encamped with his army the night before the fatal battle of Duplin was fought. There are, however, extensive ruins to be found on the

top of a little round hill to the south-east of Forteviot, called the hill of West Hall, which obviously points itself out as having been the residence of the Pictish kings for a time. The site of the ruins resembles those at Abernethy, both in its high situation and in its name, being also called the Castle Law. It had stood on the side of a small loch or lake, now converted into a mill-dam (though on the top of a high hill), for driving the west mill of Ecclesia M'Girdle, or rather M'Grigger, as he is styled in the inscription said to have been originally on M'Duff's cross. He is there called St Mac-Grigger. This castle or palace had been originally more strong or better defended than the Castle Law at Abernethy, as there have been deep trenches or fosses around it, rendering it almost impregnable; and a large mass of the wall has fallen down, and covered the entrance into some subterraneous vaults; and the rubbish still remains, unless very lately removed.

The Pictish Kings are said to have resided, occasionally at least, at or near Forteviot, after the year 684. This may have been so said, because, perhaps, Forteviot had been the place of greatest consequence next to it. After the Scots or Caledonians began to increase in power and consequence, and became formidable rivals to the Picts in waging war against them upon the least provocation, the Pictish Kings had not supposed themselves safe enough in their residence on the Castle-law at Abernethy, but had removed only about five miles farther west upon

the same ridge of hills, but to a far more secure place of residence. The hill on which it has been built will be about six hundred feet above the plain on the north, and is inaccessible from that quarter where they might apprehend the greatest danger, being only approachable from the south and south-east, with a narrow pass from the west near the water of May, which could be easily defended by a few men.

Somewhere amongst these hills, a curious anecdote is mentioned, as a striking instance of Providence vindicating itself when appealed to. A man having come one evening to a farmer's house asking quarters or lodgings, the farmer, it seems, viewed him rather in a suspicious light, and said, "I doubt I would need a cautioner for you." "Oh," says the man, "God will be my cautioner." "Well," replies the farmer, "I would never wish a better one; I will give you quarters for your cautioner's sake." Accordingly, a bed was made for him in the barn or some out-house; but, in the night-time, the unconscionable wretch arose, and bundled up all the bed-clothes, and took them away on his back. But, after he was a considerable way off, and thought himself sure of his booty, there fell a thick mist on the hills, and he wandered all day with his burden on his back, and just returned in the evening to the very house he set out from in the morning. When the farmer saw him again, he said, "I had little trust to put in you, though I had some dependence on your cau-

“tioner. Accordingly, he has not failed me;  
 “though, at the same time, he has discovered you  
 “to be a villain.” He would not readily trust him  
 a second night.

There are very extensive ruins south from this among the hills, in full view of it, called Carney-venn, which obviously appears to have had connection with this Castle-law, and is supposed to have been the place where the treasures or things of the greatest value were kept, being very difficult of access from the north, as there is a remarkable pass where other two waters meet with the May all at one point, after scooping out very deep channels, where a few resolute men could defend it against a whole army. The tradition in the immediate neighbourhood is, that there were, at some remote period, some golden keys found in a small rivulet or stream that runs past this place, which were supposed to have belonged to this Carney-venn; and the popular tradition of the country in general is very lavish respecting some treasure concealed

“Betwixt Castle Law and Carney vane,  
 “As would enrich a’ Scotland ane by ane.”

But it must be adverted to that Scotland was not by the tenth part so populous, when this tradition took its origin, as now, and consequently would be more easily enriched.

As for the tradition respecting the golden cradle in the loch near Abernethy, it is pos-

sible there may have been one belonging to the Kings of Pictland ; and, if so, it is highly probable it may have been hid when Kenneth burnt Abernethy, or rather a little afterwards, when Drusken, the last King of the Picts, fought his last battle with Kenneth at Scoon, where he and most of his nobles with the rest of the army were drowned in the Tay, by attempting to cross it after the loss of the battle. Upon hearing the fatal news, it is quite natural to suppose that the cradle would be considered the most valuable piece of furniture, and as such be attempted to be concealed, till they saw how matters would turn out ; but, as Kenneth is said to have banished them, or the few Picts that were left alive are said to have fled into England in an indigent and necessitous condition, it may be still lying in its place of concealment. This important and invaluable discovery may still be in reserve for some future zealous and persevering antiquary, which will doubly requite him for all his trouble, as the loch in which it is said to be hid, is condescended on in the tradition ; but we must not be too perspicuous, lest the royal prize be too easily won. But here I must caution those who may venture to attempt it, that they must lay their account with meeting most formidable opposition, as severals, according to account, have already made the attempt, but were always obliged to desist, from an extraordinary shower of rain,—or from thunder storms, &c. by which they were like to be drowned,—or from a little brown *mannie*,



with a red head, coming and threatening them if they did not forbear ! As to the first of these obstacles, I can point out a remedy by recommending them to step down the hill about sixty paces north-west from the ancient site of the castle, where they may get a temporary shelter in a small cave in a rock, called the Thieves Hole. But, if the little mannie with the read head should chance to come upon them, I do not know well what should be said to him, if they do not soothe him with fair words ; for, according to Sir Walter Scott's account of these sort of gentry, they are very sulky when their property or prerogative is any way infringed on ; and, though little, yet they are very strong ; so that there would be little chance of grappling with him, and, by main strength, throwing him into the loch. I am afraid that whoever tried the experiment would more likely suffer that fate himself. I believe, however, there are none of our modern antiquaries but will suppose him dead by this time ; so I shall not anticipate much opposition to them from that quarter, the reign of the *Moorish Kings* being now at an end.

As to the spot where the Pictish Kings have been buried, this has never yet been attempted to be shown by any one that ever I heard of. Now, there is a round tower, evidently of great antiquity, and universally allowed to be of Pictish origin ; but for what design it was built, has puzzled all antiquaries even to make a conjecture. Well ; the vulgar tradition concerning it may help

us a little in this dilemma. The story goes, that it was built by the Pechts (or rather Peghs, as it is vulgarly pronounced) in one night ; and that, while the work was going on, they stood in a row all the way from the Lomond hill to the building, handing the stones from one to another,—that they intended to have put a spire upon it, but an old wife looked out at a window early in the morning and frightened them away,—and farther, that the King of the Peghs was buried under it. Here the fabulous part of the tradition is so gross, that it is not easy to extract the truth out of so much rubbish. It must be recollected, however, that the people always, when they speak of these Peghs, associate that idea with a notion that they were a preternatural sort of beings, such as fairies and brownies, who never durst shew themselves in day-light ; never imagining, or scarcely believing, that they were once inhabitants of the same country as themselves. I think, then, that it is most probable the tradition had originally been, that the building was finished in a day ; but then, had the people always told it so, this would have defeated their purposes, and been contrary to the notions they had imbibed about the Peghs ; so, instead of a day-light job, they converted it into a night one. That it has been built of free-stone from the Lomond hill is clear to a demonstration, as the grist or nature of the stone points out the very spot where it had been taken from, namely, a little west, and up from the ancient wood of Drumdriell, about a mile

straight south from Meralsford. It had been built of vast detached masses which had been brought down by the flood. Neither is it impossible that it may have been finished in a day, and also in the way tradition says, by the people handing the stones to one another, so long before the invention of carriages of which we have any knowledge. The rock is about five miles in a direct line from the place; and 5500 able men could finish it in a day, after the stones were once hewn and all fitted for the building, as they evidently seem to have been done at the hill, as the stones of Solomon's Temple were. They seem in general to have been all much about the same size and form, and rounded in the outside, and so well hewn or polished as to lie very close to one another, without mortar or any other cement visible, except some mortar placed betwixt every row. Though the first stone would be some while before it arrived at its place of destination, yet, after they were once begun to be handed about, they would come thundering in as fast as they could be laid on of three or four rows, carrying on all the way up at the same time. The design, perhaps, might also at first be, if the length of the day allowed it, to put a spire on it, as is done to a similar one at Brechin; but, night coming on before they got their design accomplished, this would be the old wife that prevented it, as they might perhaps think it not worth their while to call out all their forces another day for that purpose, though it would certainly have been a great

improvement, and prevented the rain water getting down into the interior, and rotting the lofts near the top, which I perceived it had evidently done, when I went up through these lofts to the top of it. It has lately been covered with lead, which is certainly a great improvement. The summit affords a fine view, and something singular, though in height only about seventy-four feet above the surface of the ground, but founded deep down into it. As to the other part of the tradition, that the King of the Pechs is buried under it, as if there had been only one King, (and that one a giant, that he needed to be kept down!) the plain meaning is, that it was originally designed as a mausoleum for burying their Kings in, not under it, but within it, as there is full room for two or three coffins to lie beside each other within the square of the circle; and it is as clear to me as a sun-beam, that the Pictish race of Kings lie all buried within it. I am convinced that, if a trial were made, by digging down about six or eight feet, their bones will be found, as a full confirmation of this. If the attempt were made (See Appendix F.) it would need to be dug pretty deep, as, through the length of time, it is greatly filled up, even a good deal since I remember, by the dust of the feet of the men who ring the bell, &c. The consideration, that it was the burying place of the Kings, undoubtedly stamps great antiquity upon it, as it would very probably be built soon after their kingdom began to be established, and their royal residences taken up in

this place, which, so far as we know, was many centuries before the Christian era ; but those who have access to the Pictish chronicle can the better ascertain this.

I shall only detain the reader with another antiquity belonging to this place, which, though not of so early a date, is certainly a great curiosity of its kind ; that is, the custom of burning witches, and particularly the manner in which it is universally agreed they were found out. I am well aware that the zeal of our modern and fashionable sceptics is flaming hot against this doctrine ; that they not only fly directly in the face of it, flatly denying that ever there were such beings in the world, but also as strenuously maintaining that there never were any people burnt for witchcraft. As to the first of these, I shall only observe that it is evident that our forefathers thought differently ; and I shall also have that charity for them to suppose that, in putting the penal laws in execution against them, they reckoned themselves justified, both by the laws of the land and the divine Mosaic law, commanding that “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.” As to the second, viz. the actual burning of them at this place, it is an incontrovertible fact ; and to those who will not be satisfied with this assertion, I shall point out how they may obtain a little more confirmation of it. If they will take the trouble to go to the top of the hill, to the eastward of the Castle-law, opposite to where the ancient castle stood, about 800 feet above the burn or water that runs in the

bottom of that deep ravine, and at a place a little down from the top where the witches were burnt, they will find twenty-two distinct tumuli all in a row, which once had been inclosed within a feal or earthen dike, but now much sunk down; and entirely fogged. If not fully satisfied with this ocular demonstration, I have not the least doubt but, by digging below these tumuli, they will find twenty-two female skeletons, as it is plain they had not been literally burnt to ashes, else their graves would not have been so distinctly perceived, even to this day. They are still called the witches graves. The ashes of the fire where they had been burnt are still to be seen, and the road along the west side of that steep hill is also called, from this circumstance, the witch road; all which abundantly confirm the truth of their having been burnt at this place.

The uniform account that is given, as to the way and manner by which these witches were found out, is somewhat curious, and no less strange; and, if ever the poet Burns had been in this part of the country, I would have said he had taken the leading ideas or hints from it, in his humorous and excellent poem of Tam o' Shanter, or Alloway Kirk. Accordingly, I shall give the account in the exact manner I had it from my grandfather and grandmother, who both lived to a great age, and who, again, had it from their grandfather and grandmother, who also lived to a great age, and either lived at, or very soon after the time this took place, and were likewise well acquainted with the names of many

of those who suffered ; so that the story has not yet passed through many hands to be much adulterated. The account I had also from all the oldest and best informed people in the place, confirms the truth of it. In the reigns either of James VI. or Charles I. (for it was in both these reigns that the rage took place for enforcing the penal laws of the land against witches), there was a Mr Ross, laird of Invernethy, an ancient place, a little below the town of Abernethy, who seems to have been a bold spirited and active man, and who, no doubt, would be applied to on this occasion, as a justice of the peace, for detecting those suspected of witchcraft in his quarter. Sibbald, in his history of Fife, mentions a Mr Robert Ross of Hillcairney, and laird of Invernethy, in Perthshire, who was probably the same person, or at least the son of that gentleman. Mr Ross was told by one of his cottars or subtenants, who was one of the corps, that there was a register book kept, wherein all the names of those who belonged to that district were entered ; but where kept, or by whom, is not said. He was very anxious to get a hold of this book if possible ; and seems to have formed a plan for effecting this purpose, as it might save a great deal of trouble in convicting them. Having also learned from the same woman, his tenant, that there was to be a meeting of them a considerable way west, said to be at the Steps of Kilbuck or Kinbuck (I understand there is a place of that name near the Sheriff Muir), he agreed to go along with her *incog.* or in wo-

men's clothes ; but the main difficulty was, how to escape the vigilance of that old knowing dog Diabolus, their master, who, it seems, according to Burns in the foresaid poem, generally appears among them in the shape of a black towzie tyke, and who seems to prefer this form, as being more familiar to his votaries, than his own natural ugly shape. So, whenever he appeared, he began to smell out the laird, saying " I find the smell of " men ;" the wife being very anxious, no doubt, to screen her laird, made several excuses ; at length she says, " hout, its me wi' bairn, and its a laddie " bairn" (boy) ; but that did not satisfy auld Towzie ; he was of too exquisite a scent to be so easily put off ; in a word, the poor laird was detected, and obliged to confess that he was a man in woman's clothes. In order, however, to make the best of it, after he saw he was detected, he told that, as he had some thoughts of joining their corps, he had come to see how he would be pleased with their merry way of life. Accordingly, some of their merriest dances are said to have been struck up that night, in order the more to entice the laird to join them. Whether he was pleased or not, he affected to be so, and an after meeting was agreed on in consequence, which no doubt the laird would have a principal vote in appointing, the more to suit his purposes, both as to time and place. Accordingly, the meeting is said to have taken place on the Castle law, in one of those hollows in that



hill where the golden cradle is said to be hid ; and a more sequestered spot could scarcely have been fixed on, as two of these are completely concealed from every other object, though on the top of a pretty high hill. The day and hour were also fixed, and the meeting was said to have been held on a Sabbath day, in broad day light, in order the better to favour his project, when the red register book was to be ready for him to enter his name in, and with *his own blood* too ! Mr Ross, the laird, had an excellent well tried mare, said to be barren, upon which he could depend ; and he is said to have been himself such a superior and steady horseman as to be able to ride down a hill with a sixpence lying loose on his foot, without allowing it to fall off ; it would not be, however, at this time, that the experiment was made. Having every thing well preconcerted for the meeting, the last thing he did was to warn the miller of Ballo Mill, a little up, and west from the town, to be sure to have his mill going, not surely to grind corn on the Sabbath day, but only that it might make a noise, as witches were said never to come within the clap of a mill ; so it seems he fully expected a hot chase, and meant this to be the first relief or breathing place from it. Accordingly, when he came to the meeting, agreeably to appointment, he was allowed to sit on horseback, by way of deference, and the red book given him to subscribe ; but, instead of doing this, he immediately secured the book, put spurs to his mare, and galloped down the hill, the easiest

way no doubt, which would be to the south where the ground rises high at the back ; and he would soon come down upon Drumcairn ground, and then along the back of the hill till he reached the road. The witches are reported to have swarmed about him and clung to him and his mare both by the tail and mane, in the same manner as those from Alloway Kirk are represented by Burns to have clung about Tam o' Shanter's Maggy. The laird still kept his seat, and the mare her tail, till he reached the mill, which was more than a mile and a quarter distant ; and there, as he anticipated, there was a cessation from hostilities for a little. Whether this was from the clap of the mill, the crossing of the running stream about two hundred yards down from the mill, or the passing of the end of the town, is uncertain. He is said to have got a good way a-head of them ; but there seem to have been some supple lang-legged Nannies among them ; for, notwithstanding of this, they soon overtook him, and were on him again long before he reached Invernethy, which was about another mile farther. But the Laird of Invernethy's mare seems to have been of still better stuff than Tam o' Shanter's Maggy ; for the one only saved her master at the expence of her " ain " grey tail," after running only about two hundred yards ; but the other not only saved her master and also her tail, (for I never heard of it being pulled away) but likewise carried off the prize so nobly contended for in a chase of two and a-half miles. As soon as he got into the court, he gave

the mare to his man, and got into the house, locking the door behind him. He then went up stairs, and copied off their names as fast as he could possibly do ; for he knew he would not get leave to keep it long from such clamorous and troublesome visitors, as they threatened to come in at the lum-head (the chimney top) upon him, if he did not give it back. Whether he took down all the names contained in it, or only a few, is not mentioned ; but, as soon as he got what he thought sufficient, he drew up the window and threw it out to them, and thus got quit of his noisy visitors. It appears that the red-book had extended also to the greater part of the south of Perthshire, as there were a considerable number of witches burnt on the Hill of Moredun, near Perth, about the same time with those at Abernethy. It appears that their names were also taken from the fatal red-book. The seizing of the red-book saved the trouble of a formal trial, which was indispensable with those who were convicted and burnt at this time in England. I once chanced to fall in with an old book, said to be written by one of the professors of Cambridge University, wherein the names of those who were tried were mentioned, with those of the witnesses who appeared against them, proving the mischief they had done these witnesses or others, by way of revenge, &c. A great number of these were mentioned as having been convicted as much upon their own confession as by the proof led against them ; wherein they con-

fessed,—how they were initiated into the mystery of witchcraft,—what they did at their meetings,—what they said at meeting and parting, &c. in which more was confessed by them than was proved against them; consequently, a considerable number are mentioned in the book to have been fully convicted upon their own confession, and burnt, particularly at the towns of Chelmsford and Maidstone in Kent. Similar confessions are said, by Sir George M'Kenzie in his Criminal Institutes, to have been made by many in or a little before his time. If these things, then, had not been true, such a learned man as a professor of Cambridge College would not have believed them, and far less have gone the length of publishing a book regarding them. After the witches about Abernethy and the country around were collected in consequence of their names being found in the red-book (for I never heard of any other trial being gone into but this and their own confession in consequence), it is farther mentioned, that they were kept altogether for the space of three days and three nights, and watched constantly by people who relieved each other by turns, to prevent the culprits from falling asleep; and always when about to sleep, they were pricked with sharp pointed instruments, a piece of unnecessary cruelty certainly in our opinion now-a-days. But we are only novices in these mysteries; for, when I expressed my surprise at this, and asked the reason, it was answered that, if they had been allowed to

fall asleep, then their old master would have got power over them again. This is the principal foundation, if not the origin, of the stories we have often heard about pricklers going through the land to try them in this way, which, if they did not feel, they were immediately reputed to be witches. Now, after such long watching, nature being quite overcome, they might not be so ready to yield to, or obey these sharp twitches. There was also one of their number found far advanced in pregnancy ; accordingly, she was very properly and humanely reserved from suffering with the rest till she was delivered ; but this respite was the very means of saving her life, for, after she was delivered, it was not thought worth while to make preparations a-fresh, or any parade, about burning one poor witch by herself ; consequently she got off, and, on this account, was ever after called “ *Fair Emily that keepit the Castle.*” It is pretty obvious that this was the very one the Laird went along with to the first meeting, which would, perhaps, make him more interested in saving her from the fate of the rest ; and as she once stood in the character of a protectress to him, he, in his turn, when she came to need protection, would make her his protegee ; and, if so, then the child she brought forth did turn out to be a *laddie bairn*, though it was only a random guess of her’s at the time when so eager to screen her Laird. Her great grandson I knew well when I was at school ; though then an elderly, respectable, and well be-

haved man, so far was this circumstance from being reckoned a stigma upon him, that the people elected him one of their bailies, judiciously and properly choosing him rather for his own merits than rejecting him for his great grandmother's demerits.

The last of the male race of the Laird of Invernethy, so far as is known, was a Mr John Ross, a fine young man, a writer, who dropt down suddenly and expired, when in the act of shooting at a partridge, a little below Abernethy, about the autumn 1774. He killed the partridge to be sure; but the man who was along with him told me, that he believed he was as soon dead as the bird. He was buried in the old College, whose walls at that time stood about twelve or fourteen feet high.

This event, upon the whole, would, I think, afford an excellent subject for a melo-drama, being, in my humble opinion, more rich in character and scenery than either Macbeth's witches, or the farce now so much celebrated, the Warlock of the Glen. The Laird and his fair protectress would appear in different characters; any large black colley might represent his Infernal Majesty, only requiring the aid of a ventriloquist to enable him to speak human lore, though he would be very ready to betray himself, and express himself in his own natural language, immediately when he perceived the voice proceed from himself, being too much elated with his imaginary accomplishments. There would likewise require to be something resembling

the clap of a mill on the stage, to relieve the Laird, and give him a little breathing from the hot pursuit of the witches ; but, as the last scene was no farce, but a most serious tragedy, care would need to be taken, when the burning of the witches came to be acted, lest the farce, as it would be called, though founded on facts, be also converted into a tragedy.

Abernethy was an early seat of the Culdees ; and, for many centuries afterwards, continued to be famous for learned men, having a College, and different professors or masters attached to it. There was a fragment of the College standing till within these hundred years back, in which the school was kept in which my grandfather, as he told me, and his father, were both taught ; and they both died proprietors of the houses, gardens, and lands which are said to have belonged to the professors of the College. Their ancestors, also, both by father and mother's side, had property, both in the town lands and also in the vicinity of the town, time immemorial, so that it is very probable their ancestors might be among the original settlers after the expulsion of the Picts ; consequently their traditions, as handed down from one generation to another, may be reckoned more genuine, and more to be depended upon for authority. Though not born there, yet I spent many youthful days in or about Abernethy, when at school, as it has been generally all along famed for good schools. There were two large schools in it at that time. Many came far

and near to them at that time, as English, Arithmetic, Latin, and Greek, were taught in great perfection, and upon very easy terms. A young man who was a class fellow of mine (whom I left there, being a little sooner entered than he), attended the first Greek class of the late Professor Dalzell, in the College of Edinburgh. The Professor was so astonished to see Greek taught at a country school in such perfection, that he asked him the name of his schoolmaster, and where he was taught. When told the name, he desired him to give his compliments to the master, and tell him that he had acted his part very well. This same young man turned out to be an ornament to the College of Edinburgh, both in Latin and Greek, and afterwards died in possession of a Professorship himself, though in a distant land.

About a hundred years ago, Latin was taught so generally, and in such perfection, about Abernethy and Auchtermuchty, that, besides the better sort, many of the mechanics and common tradesmen are said to have been taught it till they were considerable proficient in it. I know an old man, a mechanic, alive till about two months ago, who was taught considerably later than the time referred to, and who is said to have been a very good Latin scholar in his youth. About that period, there were excellent schoolmasters in both these places; and a spirit of emulation and rivalry was kept up between those of the scholars, who were farthest advanced in either place, going and challenging



those of the others alternately to dispute, by giving out and answering theses, both in Latin and English; though the distance was about four and a half miles, and over a hill too, yet this did not cool their ardour. I remember well the account that was given of the last dispute of this nature, and the last thesis that was given out, in which the Abernethians obtained the victory. A large body of the Auchtermuchty scholars was said to have come over and challenged those of Abernethy; they in their turn accepted it, and went in a body to the east end of the town, where both parties continued the dispute for a considerable time *sub dio*, giving out Latin sentences to be translated into English, and English into Latin. At length one of the Abernethy scholars gave "*The bottom of a black dice*" to be Latinized; this the Auchtermuchty scholars, it seems, could not do, and immediately they turned their backs and fled as vanquished. This caused the Abernethians to give a shout of triumph as victors. But, *tempora et mores mutantur*—I dare say this would have also puzzled many of our modern Latinists, without consulting their dictionaries, and made them run too as vanquished.

The old College stood in the north side of the church-yard, and part of its walls, to the height of twelve or fourteen feet, were still remaining about forty-five years ago; but not a vestige of it now is to be seen. This was a little behind the old venerable church, now, alas! also no more. What a pity to have demolished such an ancient and venerable

building, which had stood for many centuries as the metropolitan of the Pictish episcopal see, till it was translated by Kenneth II. to St Andrews, about the middle of the ninth century. It was undoubtedly one of the oldest churches in Christendom, and seems evidently to have been built soon after the introduction of Christianity into our island. Now, Donald I. is said to be the first King of Scotland who embraced the Christian religion, and is said by Buchanan to have begun his reign in the year of our Lord 201, and to have died in the 18th year of his reign. He is described to have been a good and religious king.

Christianity would no doubt be much about this time embraced by the King of the Picts, who would soon set about building a church in his capital, which was done upon a large scale originally, as the extensive foundation lately discovered beyond the building lately erected abundantly testify. Though I happened to contribute my quota towards building the new one to a considerable amount, and though I have not the honour to be a member of any antiquarian society, yet I am so much of an antiquary as that I would rather have cheerfully contributed my additional proportion of L.200 sterling, only allowed for it in the estimate, to have permitted it to remain in the place it had occupied for 1400 years at least !

Were a Gaelic scholar now to look for the Nethy, the little winding stream, as its name imports, and from which the town takes its name, he would

scarcely find it, at least not in the original channel it had occupied when the town derived its name from it. Taking its rise among the hills to the south from some small lochs and springs, it had originally run down through a deep hollow, passing through the east end of the present town, and through the middle of the old town, and, after many wimples and windings in its course through the plain, had fallen into the Earn at Innernethy; but at a very early period, indeed, it had been diverted out of its course in the hill at the head of the hollow, and brought across near the foot of the hill, being left to scoop out a new passage for itself, which it has done in a fine beautiful romantic style, before it found its level. This had been done evidently primarily with a view to supply the town with a portion of its water, which is now carried down to it through a covered way towards the middle of the town, and ultimately to assist another stream with the surplus of its waters in turning a mill at the west end of the town. After effecting this, it then runs in conjunction with the other stream, and falls into the Earn, a mile to the westward of where it had originally done so. Little more than the surplus of that small portion, after serving the town with water, runs now into the Earn at Innernethy, its original mouth.

Dr Jamieson, in his History of the Culdees, takes notice of this as one of their seats, and has an extract from the Pictish Chronicle, in which a very curious grant is given of the town and most

of the lands about Abernethy, to God and St Bridget till doom's day, by one of the Pictish Kings, I think either one of the Nectan's, or Brude, about the latter end of the 6th or beginning of the 7th century (I quote only from memory). The boundaries of the grant begin from a large dark blue stone that lay deep in the earth till very lately, upon which I suppose the end of the new bridge is now built, on the right bank of the stream, at the west end of the town called in that Chronicle the Trent or Abertrent, (Aber, the mouth or outlet of its confinement). It runs thus, "*a Saxo in Abertrent usque ad Atan, deinde ad altum,*" i. e. to the depth of the Earn. Though not mentioned there, this must be the west side of the square; the south side commences from the foresaid stone, including all the town, "*usque ad Carpool,*" (now Carpow, near to which the town extended); the east side extended from Carpool, running down by a small stream, "*usque ad Innernethy,*" where the Nethy falls into the Earn, "*ad dextram ripam Amni,*" (i. e. the right bank of the river Earn,) the Earn being the northern boundary of the square or parallelogram, being about a mile and a half long by a mile broad. The Doctor it seems was at a loss where to find the Atan there mentioned. He told me that he wrote to several gentlemen thereabouts, to see if they could give him any information, but without success. But, had they known his design, they could scarcely have failed to find its name, with only very little variation from the original, in

the little farm town of Hatun, near the Earn, and upon which the Trent directly flows ; but, before reaching it, taking a sudden bend to the eastward, it enters the Earn through a very deep gully or ravine called Hatun-pow, but in the old language called a Tulloch ; hence the names of towns, Tulloch, Kintulloch, Kirkintulloch, Tullochgoram, &c.

This St Bridget was a virgin most eminent for piety, who, with other young virgins, came from Glenesk, far east in Angus, to this eminent seat of the Culdees, and is said to have been buried with the other nine virgins behind the church, under a large oak, near about where the College stood ; but the oak is gone, no doubt, many hundred years ago. There is a farm-steading near the west end of the town, called Drumhead ; and Abernethy is said then to have extended east about a mile and a half to another farm of the name of Drumferden, which, I suppose, must be Drumfoot, or, as Drum signifies a ridge, it may be the ridge at the head and the ridge at the foot of the town, because the west end was the court end, being nearest the king's palace or castle.

I lately received a letter from an acquaintance, informing me that the workmen at the roads, in levelling an eminence in the road near about where Abernethy is said to have originally extended towards the east, discovered five or six urns full of the ashes and fragments of burnt bones, with their bottoms uppermost. Unfortunately, however, they

were all broken in taking them out, except one, on account of their being within five or six inches of the surface. This is of a pretty large size, as all the rest are said to have been. It is made of very coarse burnt clay, with some rude sculpture about the mouth, narrow at bottom, and bulging out wide towards the middle and mouth, with a narrow neck. It is now in possession of James Paterson, Esquire, of Carpow. These urns obviously appear to be Roman, and to have been inhumed by the Roman garrison when stationed at Carpow, a little to the north-east of this, as they usually buried their dead not always at one place, but all around, wherever a fit place offered, as fancy suggested.

About half a mile to the north-west of this, a short time ago, a ploughman turned up with his plough, on the farm of Balgonie, a small jar full of gold and silver coins. There were a great number of the silver ones, amounting in all to about 200, consisting of two different kinds, a larger and smaller, in very good preservation, though not of very fine silver; the larger ones above the size of our old shillings, though much thinner, and the lesser ones above the size of our old sixpences. The gold ones were about twelve or fourteen in number, about the same sizes and proportions, but of very fine pure yellow virgin gold. They are all Scots coins, belonging to one of the Roberts; and though not mentioned, they are supposed to be Robert II. as there were no gold coins said to be coined before his time. On the obverse side is very distinct-

ly engraved “Robertus Scottorum rex Dei Grat:” and “Edinburgh ville,” and on some “Perth ville;” on others, in an interior circle, nearer the centre of the coin, showing that they had been coined at these different places. On the reverse is a St Andrew’s cross with that tutelar saint of Scotland suspended on it, and some superstitious legend about the Virgin, which I had not full time to decypher from the short view I got of them, as some of the letters were of the old English or Saxon capitals. It is supposed that, had they been all sold, they would have amounted to near about L.50 in value; but I understand that Sir David Moncrieff, the proprietor of the lands, has now got them. It seems the man who turned them over supposed them to be only a parcel of useless trinkets, or “*bairns play-fairs*,” as he called them; and when the jar which contained them was broken by the plough, and they fell out of it, he took little or no notice of them. They lay a whole day without any notice being taken of them; but next day, when returning home from the plough, he brought them with him; but, his horse being a little unruly, he lost some of them by the way. He threw them down on the dresser, saying, that there were the bairn’s play-fairs. Mrs Barclay, the landlady, however, began to take notice of them, and to wash some of them free of the clay that adhered to them, and then, to her utter astonishment, saw that they were ancient coins, and soon perceived some of them to be valuable ones.

too. A gentleman, who happened to be accidentally present, afterwards went along with the man\* to the place where they were turned up, and, by following the horses tract, they found several of those that he had lost. They found a piece of another urn or jar and some large stones about the place, but no more coins.

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\* This man's conduct seems to be an exception to the generality of those who happen to find any thing that appears to be uncommon, either under the earth or even upon the surface, which they cannot account for, as they generally conceive it to be money or some hidden treasure. Illustrative of this, a workman, in this immediate neighbourhood, some years ago happened to find a hedge-hog lying coiled up in its usual manner, which animal, it appears, he had never seen before, but, from its uncommon appearance as well as its weight, he immediately judged it to be a purse full of money. Accordingly, he carried it home with great care, and told his wife to shut the door, "For," says he, "I have now found a purse that will keep us all easy." He then alluded to the family by whom he was employed at the time in a very disrespectful manner; but, adds he, "we shall never need to work to them any more." But, then, how to get the purse that contained the supposed treasure opened was a matter of difficulty, for it was so well defended at all points, that much violence could not be used with impunity; so he sets to work with all his might; but the more force he used, the more closely contracted it kept itself, so that, after a long and fruitless attempt, he was obliged to desist, and lay it down to take a rest. But, alas! how suddenly were all his flattering prospects and most sanguine hopes blasted, when, to his great



## CHAP. VII.

*An Account of the site of several Roman Forts recently discovered in Fife and Strathearn, with their names, &c. to the eastward of the line of the great North Road to the Capital.*

*A Roman Fort and Bath at Caerpool.*

A few years ago, the present proprietor of Carpow found, on an eminence a little behind the present new house, a Roman bath, with a sudatory or sweating room, and other subterranean apartments, with a wall that ran a considerable way below ground; this he attempted to take down, but, fortunately for the antiquary, its firm and compact nature resisted all his efforts, so that he was obliged to desist, and build up the entry again. The bath was quite entire, and was made so as to allow the person to lie and stretch out himself at full length, with a pavement which, so far as I could under-

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mortification, he perceived what appeared to him to be the purse containing the supposed treasure open of its own accord, to stretch itself out, and then walk off deliberately on all fours in below the bed.

stand by the description given, was a tessilated one. There were also some beautiful urns with handles found, which contained burnt bones, but, unfortunately, when exposed to the atmospheric air, they crumbled down. There were also two Roman coins found by a man when scouring a ditch, one of them a beautiful coin of the Empress Faustina. These were given to a gentleman to be presented to the Antiquarian Society of Edinburgh; but it is supposed they have never as yet found their way thither.

All these circumstances taken together obviously prove that this had been an eminent Roman station as well as a fort, as its name imports, Caerpool, the fort of the deep, or the fort that guards the passage of the deep. As there has been from time immemorial a passage across the river Earn by boats opposite to this, the fort had been built not only to guard this passage, but also the pass through the hills to the south-east by Macduff's Cross. It would likewise command the one up the south side of the Tay by Newburgh, so that this behoved to be a very important station. It is evident, however, that it was only the Earn that ran near this at this early period, as there is the most indubitable evidence that the Tay at that time, and for many hundred years afterwards, ran in by the foot of the Carse hills for a far way east, and joined the Earn at Invergoury, making what is now called the Carse of Gowrie form a peninsula. The old bed of the Tay is yet visible in many places, and its course or

tract can easily be traced by the names of many farms lying a little above the low bed of the river ; which farms formed small islands, or inches as they were then called, and still retain the name, such as Inchagra, Meginch, Inchtire, two Inchmichaels, and Inchcunins ; this last had abounded in conies or rabbits, as cunins is the old Scots word for these animals. At a place called Flack Craig, rings are yet to be seen in the rock, to which the people had moored or fastened the vessels. We are not solely beholden to tradition concerning this ; for I have seen in an old printed record that the parish of the Rhynd formerly extended as far east through the Carse as the small parish of St Madoes now does, but that, after the Tay cut its way through the neck of the narrow isthmus, and joined the Earn, those people who belonged to the Rhynd parish, on the east of the Tay, still continued to attend their parish church by crossing the Tay in boats, till one Sabbath afternoon, a boat, heavy laden with people, returning home, sunk, and they all perished. It was this affecting accident that made those in the Carse, to the eastward of the Tay, think seriously about building another church, which they did, and called it St Madoes. The parish kirk of the Rhynd is now left in the angle betwixt the junction of the rivers, with only the farm town of Easter Rhynd to the eastward.

Agricola, after the great battle of Meralsford, or the Lomond Hill, is said, by his prudence and valour, to have reduced all that part of the island,

south of the friths, *i. e.* of the Clyde, Forth, and Tay, into a Roman province. As for the northern parts, they were not worth the conquering or keeping; only strong garrisons were placed in the fortresses built on this side the friths. The planning of these forts had occupied his time all the summer, after the great battle was fought in the spring; because it is said that it was about the end of summer, or when the summer was almost spent, before he led back his army into the country of the Horestians. This also plainly points out that he had been a little farther north than Fife. It is quite obvious to me that he had been as far north as the banks of the Earn; but it is equally plain that he carried his operations no farther north. It is said, indeed, that he saw the Tay; but this he could easily do from the foot of the glen of Abernethy, or the banks of the Earn, though it was unquestionably a little farther distant at that period than now. Forts had been built at the passages of the Earn, and also at all the passes through the hills to the south, to guard the south and north entrances into these; and, fortunately, we can yet trace the greater part of them, either by their names, or by vestiges of them still remaining,—or at least by both.

The first of these we shall take notice of, after that at Caerpool, is one that had been built at Cary, about two miles west from Carpow, and in full sight of it, close by the Earn. There also had been from time immemorial a passage across the Earn at this place by a boat; and a fort had been built here,

looking up the glen of Abernethy, to guard it, as its name imports. It had just been styled originally *Caer*, the fort ; but, on account of its being a lesser one than that at *Caerpool*, they had added through time the *y* to it, *Cary*, the little fort, as a diminutive of *Caer*, which name it still retains. As there was comparatively no road to the north by *Kinross* till of late, the main road from *Kinghorn* to the north continued till long after *Oliver Cromwell's* time, or even a hundred years later than this. It ran by the west end of a small loch called *Bog Lochtie*, but which is now drained, and by the east end of *Loch Leven*, by the *Gullet Bridge*, till it branched off into two roads at the village of *Burnside* ; the one to *Perth* going up the hollow above it towards *Damhead*, and the other north-east in an oblique manner to the glen of *Abernethy*.

We find two of these forts in the pass above *Burnside*. One of them is on the east side, on the farm of *Carmore*, built on a beautiful round hill, raised into a top, commanding a full view of the road all the way from the *Gullet Bridge*, and a great part of the hollow of *Fife* to the eastward. It had been upon a pretty large scale, as its name imports, *Caermore*, the Great Fort ; but unfortunately the plough has also found its way up to it, and all the place where the main fort had been is now demolished, and entirely levelled ; only a strong rampart of earth is still remaining, where the plough has not touched, on the south side of the hill. The men, when removing the large stones, found some

burnt bones, and about two dozen of pretty clear blackish beads, tolerably large, some of them resembling those found in the cairn at Pitlochy, which shew that the Roman soldiers had used these very much as ornaments. The other fort is down in the hollow to the westward, on the farm of Drunzie, Drunky, or Drungy, as it is usually called. This had been obviously the original name given by the inhabitants to the fort, as it is close by the farm-house, upon a steep base to the eastward, and overlooking the narrow pass on the road that had at that period gone up betwixt the fort and the little rivulet called Carmore Burn. Unfortunately, however, it has shared the fate of most of all these eminent Roman antiquities in the neighbourhood, being levelled on the top; and the same relics of antiquity were found here as in the one at Carmore, viz. bones and beads, which plainly shews that they had consecrated their forts to the manes of some of their departed heroes, by burying some of their bones and relics under the foundations, as these have been found in all the forts that I have heard of being tried. As a help for finding out the meaning of the name given to this fort, I may remark that there are two lakes or lochs in the Trosachs, near Loch Ketterin; the one pretty large and beautiful, called Loch Venachar, or the Blessed Lake; the other a great deal smaller and more diminutive, called Drunky, which is obviously a term of diminutive import, and is evidently the same name originally with this fort, which was ob-

viously built upon a lesser scale, and also lower down in the hollow than the one at Carmore. The inhabitants had given it the same name as the little dwarfy; for the old Scots name for a dwarf and dwarfy, which are still much in use in the country, are Droch and Drochy or Droughy; thus the only difference betwixt these and the name here given is the want of the *n*.

The north entrance of this great pass from Strathearn, by which the road from Perth to Queensferry came, till of late the new road down the Water of Farg was made, was also well guarded by two forts, which had stood at the south end or head of that steep, long, and narrow pass, called the Weets or Wicks of Baigley. The one on the east side obviously points itself out to have been on the top of that beautiful conical hill called Fil-day Law, (perhaps from Phildius,) which is evidently artificial; at least all the irregularities or excrescences have been removed. It had a broad flattish top, but it is now subject to the operations of the plough. The other on the rising grounds on the opposite or west side has not retained such a very pretty name, being styled Lousy Law; but, as a compensation for its ugly name, it retains the privilege of having an annual fair for bestial in the month of May, though the place consists of only two or three small houses. But this vulgar name is evidently a very gross corruption of its original one, as it is usually spelled Lusty Law. Here we have most decidedly the vestiges of the name of

Agricola's successor, Sallustius Lucullus, in that of this fort, which retains the two middle syllables, or the most prominent part of the name, leaving out the first and last syllables. As Agricola was recalled soon after the battle of Meralsford,—at least as soon as we may suppose the news of the victory had reached Rome, and a messenger had been sent back to recal him,—we cannot suppose him to have had time to build any of these forts. If he had leisure in the interval even to plan or point out the site of these, it was as much as we can well suppose him to have had time to do. The last mentioned fort appears to be the westernmost of all in the great line or chain of forts, which runs along the higher grounds at all the passes on the south borders of Strathearn and the north of Fife, and then stretches over, in an oblique manner, all the way to the East Neuck of Fife, as it is still called. As there is no pass over the hills to the westward for many miles, we may naturally suppose this fort to be the very first one that would be erected; and, as it guarded the principal pass from the north to the south through Fife to the capital, it is very natural to suppose that the general and commander-in-chief would impose his own name upon it, calling it Fort Sallustius; but, through ignorance and inattention, this illustrious name has now degenerated into one of the utmost opprobrium. I am not only borne out in this conjecture by the resemblance of the one name to the other, but also by the privilege of the fair annexed to this fort. This, also,



at the same time, stamps great antiquity upon the institution of this fair, obviously deriving its origin from that early period, from the inhabitants being encouraged to bring their cattle to that place to be bought for the service of the Roman garrison.

Although there appears to have been no fort at Balcanquhal, yet either the Roman army had halted there in their return to the north, or there behoved to have been a Roman settlement somewhere about it. Perhaps both conjectures may be correct, as the finding the foresaid vessels, as well as a Roman urn, full of burnt bones, in the vicinity, would seem to demonstrate. There seem also to have been a few Roman houses or dwellings on the height, a little to the eastward, above Upper Pitlochrie, very much resembling those small square buildings of which the Urbs Orea, directly opposite, consists. It is somewhat remarkable that, in autumn last, there was one of Queen Elizabeth's shillings picked up, only a very few yards from where the Roman bronze vessels were discovered. This I have had for some time in my possession; it is of fine silver, and in very good preservation, having on the obverse side her head, with the ordinary inscription, *ELIZAB. DEI GRAT. ANGL. FR. & HIB. REGIN.*; and on the reverse, *ADJUTOREM DEUM MEUM POSUI*,—viz. I have placed God as my helper; which inscription, though it was upon many coins of her predecessors, yet was most remarkably verified about the time of the invasion by the Spanish Armada

in 1588. It appears that she did not place this trust in vain ; for, if ever the hand of God was visible in defending a nation, and in taking signal vengeance on its enemies, it was eminently so on that occasion. For though this great and expensive armament made its appearance in a most formidable manner, and was pompously and impiously styled the Invincible Armada, yet how soon did the vanity and falsehood of this proud title appear, when it was dashed to pieces by the winds and waves, without scarcely any other enemy appearing, except the English hanging on its rear, and picking up and carrying many of the vessels into port, without almost any opposition ! So effectual, indeed, was their destruction, that not an individual ship of that vast and expensive armament ever returned to its native port ; and but few of the forlorn crew survived the wreck, who appeared rather as pitiful supplicants than prisoners, and who were most generously maintained, and sent home by that very nation which they came to exterminate as heretics !

Little more than a mile east from Balcanquhal, we find another of these forts on the top of a beautiful conical hill, called Bein's Law. It rises from a wide base about 150 feet above the level of the other grounds around, and gradually terminating in a beautiful conical top ; and though lately its sides have been planted by Lord Mansfield, yet its summit and the site of the fort have very judiciously been left free. Considerable pains had been taken to smooth all the sides of it, and cast up a rampart of

earth round its base, to render it more inaccessible to an enemy. Very fortunately, the obliterating plough has never found its way up to this fort ; so that both the vestiges and dimensions of it are yet distinctly visible. It is quite circular, having had a strong wall running around it, about 133 feet in circumference. Some of the foundation stones yet appear ; and it seems to have been divided into four divisions, by two walls crossing the centre. It appears to have been upon a pretty large scale, as it would be of great importance, serving, by its situation, for guarding two important passes, being placed nearly in the angle where they met. It has a most commanding view of the east road from Kinghorn, all the way from Falkland and Strathmiglo, and when it enters the pass near Pitlour, all the way up to the glen of Abernethy. It stands on the west side, and near the head of this grand pass. It also had served to guard the road branching off at Burngrange from the west, as formerly noticed, leading to the glen, as that road skirts its northern base. The import and origin of the name of this fort or fortress may be gathered from an ancient word, which is yet frequently in use. A person is said to be *bein*, or to live very *bein*, when he is snug and comfortable, having all his wants supplied. The soldiers of this fort or garrison, it would appear, had been in this situation, or were supposed to be so by the country people, because they had both a snug dwelling, and all their wants supplied ; so that it is very probable they would call it the *Bein Fort*,

or Law, or “the snug and comfortable dwelling.” It also gives name to the farm immediately behind it to the north, called Meikle Bein, and also another one now joined with this, called Little Bein; this would insinuate as if there had been a lesser fort somewhere about it, but which I have not yet discovered. It must be down at a place called Bein’s Neuck, where there is a ford, and a road passing the water of Farg.

The late farmer on this farm, when draining a bog, found a leaden pan about three feet below the surface, something resembling a large stew pan, which would contain about nine or ten Scotch pints, but wanting a handle or bow, full of the ashes of burnt bones, and some yellow stuff. This I now have in my possession; but unfortunately it was considerably damaged in taking it out, as the man who found it was rather too hasty and eager to get it out, fondly supposing that it contained hidden treasure. In another part of the farm, when opening two small cairns, he found two stone coffins set on edge and covered, containing also the ashes of burnt bones. In the midst of one of them, he found a small cup of burnt clay, the same as most of the Roman urns are made of, about the size of a breakfast cup, but neatly bulged out, and contracted in the mouth, with two rows of rude sculpture around it, straight lines reversed, and made in the form of triangles, which appear pretty neat. This also he obligingly left me as a legacy, lately, when he set off for Van Dieman’s Land.

This Beins Fort, or Beins Law, is in a most commanding situation, and has a full view of Fil-day Law and Fort Sallustius, *alias* Lusty Law, *alias* Lousy Law, as well as severals on the north-east hills, and two on the other side of the pass opposite. This being a very important pass, and next to the one on the west through the Weets of Baigley for importance, required to be well guarded,—and it seems to have been so. On the east of this, and directly looking down upon the entry of the pass or hollow, there is a beautiful conical hill, rising into a somewhat narrow flattish top. This hill stands a little above and to the north-west of Pitlour House; and nature seems to have done every thing here on a grand scale, leaving little for art to effect, forming a sort of barricado or rampart of rocks around the extremities of the flat top; and, where these had not been thought complete, ramparts of earth have been thrown up. The popular tradition of the country makes it a Roman camp, at least it generally goes by this name; but it is by no means so correct as if they had called it a Roman fort, which it obviously seems to have been.

On the south-west side of the hill, which has been originally very steep, and is pretty much so yet, though it has been obliged to yield up a good deal of this to the all conquering plough, there was, till about twenty years ago, a considerable number of curious terraces, evidently artificially made along the side of the hill, which appeared to

have been once occupied as encampments. At some period or other there had been a slaughter of troops near it, as there were found a great quantity of burnt bones and ashes lying below stones thrown upon them, when these shelves or terraces were taken in by the plough. These had either been the ashes of the Romans who had fallen in the assault, or of those who had fallen when attacking the fort. A few years ago, there was picked up at this place a curious antique ring of very fine silver, and in very good preservation, with a small round knob upon it, resembling a diamond, with a cross beside it, and an inscription around it. The inscription plainly shews that it had been made and worn on the finger after the introduction of Christianity.

The most beautiful and perfect specimen of encampments in this terrace way, is to be found contiguous to the village of Markinch on the north, whereon four or five of these, rising gradually above one another, are cut with the greatest beauty and symmetry around a steep and verdant bank, in the form of a grand amphitheatre. Though the amphitheatre is not quite complete on the north side, it is truly a grand and most striking object.—A little to the east of this is a farm town called Dalginch, where is a beautiful and conical hill or eminence, called Dalginch Law, of great antiquity, obviously the site of a Roman fort, as all these Laws generally were. Sir John Dalrymple, who wrote a book the century before last, mentions that justice was wont to be administered from this Law, and

that parties came from all quarters around, and even at a great distance, for this purpose,—that parties were allowed fifteen days to bring in their proof, or to bring in the bestial stolen, in order to be proved. He mentions that persons were even accustomed to come all the way from Aberdeen, or from the south of Scotland, to this place.

In the middle of the great pass above Pitlour, leading to the glen of Abernethy, there had been another Roman fort up near the farm-town of Dunbarrow, and from which, it is quite evident, the town had derived its name, signifying the Hill of the Cairn, or Little Mount. This Mount on which it had been built is evidently that small round hill or eminence, a little south of the farm, which is now planted with firs. The vestiges of the fort or building still appear; and it seems admirably adapted for the purpose, being not only near the middle of that great pass or opening betwixt the fort at Beins Law and that at Pitlour, but also in the centre betwixt the two roads to which it had at that time led up on the east by Dunbarrow bank—which for a long time it did—or up the hollow on the west, keeping near the water track that runs down,—as is most probable,—and which is now the plan again adopted in making the roads, by keeping the level of the water runs.

Another fort had stood a little above this on that high rocky eminence at the head of the Glen of Abernethy, called the Craig of Pittenbroigh. This would be a very commanding station, as it is at

the head of these two great south and north passes, and also where four roads meet; and a fifth passes at a little distance. As a confirmation of this having been a fort, there were several small cairns or *tumuli* opened, where the Romans had buried their dead a little to the west, when that piece of waste ground in the angle betwixt the new and old roads was lately taken in and ploughed.

The mouth or entrance of the glen,—that great pass or thoroughfare from the north,—had been very particularly guarded, apparently by no less than three forts, one upon the Castle-Law, on an eminence about the middle of the hill, and a little below the Pictish Kings' very palace or castle; another in the very middle of the gorge or pass upon that high eminence called the Quarrel-know. This would guard both the road that had gone up on the west side where the present one goes, and also the one on the east, which at that time had led down to the town of Abernethy, along the head of the steep bank, above the deep and narrow ravine which the water has made. The vestiges of the old road appear here amongst the furze; and where it passes the fort and joins the present one is yet distinctly visible in the east side of this fort, presenting a bold and steep side to the east, and looking directly down upon it. This seems to be more confirmed from the other one that stood a little more down, and to the eastward upon the point of the high rock, where the water takes a bend, and, turning to the east, cuts a passage through a stupen-



dous rock. The vestiges of this one were distinctly visible when I was at school; and we many times wondered what could be the meaning of this ancient building on the top of the rock, when amusing ourselves amongst this pleasant and romantic scenery. But unfortunately every vestige of this is now erased by the all-levelling plough, which has come quite close upon the top of the rock and the banks, by its intrusions.

The road passing betwixt these forts to the town of Abernethy,—and entering a still more ancient road, narrow and hollow, with steep banks of three and six feet high on both sides, which has served for a road to it ever since it was a town,—plainly points out, not only that Abernethy had been of considerable eminence at that early period, but also that it had been peopled many hundred years before that time.

The name of the Quarrelknow, an eminence on which the middle fort was built, may be easily gathered from its close contiguity to the Abernethians, through which roads they would often have to pass, and which even interpose between their king and his very capital; so there would naturally be frequent quarrelling and discord betwixt them and the Roman garrison. Whatever way they looked around them, they saw themselves closely environed by these imposing badges of their subjugation, and hateful memorials of their slavery, having no less than seven of these forts within half a mile of one part or other of their town.

Less than a mile to the south of the Quarrelknow, there has been another small fort, at the head of that narrow pass called Drumcairn Glen, to guard that pass, and from which the farm obviously takes its name, signifying the ridge of the cairn, as it is built upon a high ridge of rising ground, the fort being at the south end of it, or where it begins to rise into a ridge.

Near adjoining to this, on the south east, is a farm town called Catohill, finely situate for guarding or inspecting a hollow pass crossing over from the water of Farg towards the head of the Glen of Abernethy, as well as another leading by this to the middle, and also one coming from the south by the west side of this towards Drumcairn Glen, which leads to the foot of the said Glen of Abernethy. It obviously appears, from the name of this farm, that there had been a fort here for guarding these passes, on the hill a little east from the house now planted ; and, as this name was little susceptible of adulteration or corruption, it still retains its original one, which had been given to it from some Roman of the name of Cato, that had been governor or superintendant of that fort. Even in common pronunciation it is yet but little corrupted, only the emphasis is put on the *o*, sounding it longer than it ought to be. Or perhaps this name may have been given it in honour of Cato, the great Roman senator and philosopher, who lived but a short time before this ; who, though illustrious in his life, yet betrayed great human weakness and cowardice at his death, having, after reading Plato on the

immortality of the soul, deliberately committed the atrocious crime of suicide, constituting what is termed in our law a *felo de se*.

The beautiful and romantic pass through which the Farg or Argie runs down, about little more than a mile to the westward, had been also guarded by two of these forts, one on each side. The one on the west had been placed on that eminence above Pottiemill, called Kirkpottie, from a Catholic chapel having been once there, the site of which is yet easily perceived, with the burying ground close beside it. There is a remarkable fine well near it; and the fort had just been on the eminence above it, the vestiges of which are still to be seen. Now, the Latin word for a well is *puteus*, and consequently the word for wells, in the plural number, is *putei*, so that these forts would be styled by the Romans, Forts Putei, the forts beside the wells. Here, then, we have obviously the name of the House of Pottie, which stands upon part of the grounds connected with the last mentioned fort, and in its immediate vicinity; and also the name of Kirkpottie, from the fort on the west side, with the chapel attached to it. The cement used by glaziers for putting in glass into windows is called putty, a word very like putei; and this is usually called potty, the very name of this house. About three miles up this pass,—so beautiful and romantic, that Prince Leopold, when in his tour to the north country, while the horses were feeding at the inn, told the landlord that he had not seen so beautiful a glen in all his travels, even Germany not excepted,—

I perceive there had been a Roman fort a little to the south east of the inn, at Beinsnuik. This I did not discover till lately, as there was no road up the glen till within these few years. It had stood on that eminence, behind the clump of trees, where the farm of Little Bein once stood, which name had obviously been derived from the fort, whose ruins are still visible. There was but one road that crossed the Farg, at a ford a little below, in an oblique direction, that led from Perth to the castle and barony of Balvaird; and so effectually was every pass and every cross road guarded, that this fort had been erected to guard even this solitary road, which also shows that it had been used as a road even at this early period.

The ancient rocking stone of Balvaird, mentioned by old authors,—though now never taken notice of for nearly two hundred years, since the time Oliver Cromwell's soldiers went past, who are said to have destroyed its vibratory powers,—can still be discerned by a little inspection, as it lies upon the side of the new road, upon the right bank of the Farg, about half a mile up from the inn. It might still be restored to its ancient state of vibration, or rocking, by removing the stones and rubbish now lying under it. Oliver Cromwell himself slept two nights in the ancient house of Fordel, about half a mile south-west from this.

Upon a more particular inspection, I find there had been also another fort called Meikle Bein, which had stood upon a roundish or oval hill pretty elevated, before the farm-steading of Meikle

Bein, and from which it had been also named. It had been originally almost perpendicular in its sides, with a strong rampart of earth thrown up on the east side, where the entry had been, in order to guard it; and the fort now lies in ruins near the centre of it, though the stones seem all to have been removed. There is also a beautiful and once strong camp close by it on the north-west, upon a pretty large scale. It is not fully square, but a little rounded in the corners, adapted to the nature of the ground. But I am afraid this will soon be demolished, as the present farmer has all the furze and broom cut up, and the demolishing plough just ready to enter and level it.

Upon further and more particular examination, I find there had been other four forts that I have passed over. One had stood on that eminence, at the little village of Newbigging, before Balcanquhall, to guard an old road still remaining, and also the passage up the hollow, through which the water comes down, a little to the eastward. This accounts for the five bronze vessels being found so near this. Another had stood on an eminence, on the east side of the little water, still more near it, of considerable elevation, and flattish on the top. This is the place where the small square houses seem to have been, as formerly mentioned. These had been dwelling-houses beside the fort, as there had been plenty of room on the top, though now all defaced by the plough. A very little farther east, there are still the vestiges of the other two small forts on the top of two

small conical hills, where the old road, which is still used as such, had gone through betwixt them, the basis of each coming down to the sides of the road. The one on the east side was lately planted, being considerably higher than the other, and rising beautifully into a conical form, but is now become an almost impenetrable thicket, by the furze, which is as high as a man, and the branches of the firs so interwoven together, that it was with considerable difficulty I could penetrate to the top, where I found the little fort lying in ruins, on a flattish round top, with a strong rampart of stones and turf, partly natural and partly artificial. The one on the west side is not near so high. It is quite bare; and, as the plough has never yet touched the top of it, the vestiges of the fort are quite visible, though not so much so as the other; and the entry to it from the west is a long narrow ridge. It is in such places as these, particularly the one on the east, that the sites of these ancient forts appear to best advantage, where the unhallowed plough cannot well touch them.

The ridges of ground here, and for a far way east through Fife, rise into beautiful little eminences among the arable lands, sometimes into round, sometimes into oval little hills, and also into conical shaped ones. The Romans had improved these on the sides of the passes for erecting their forts upon; but here two present themselves naturally close contiguous to one another, and the road passing directly through betwixt them, which has been embraced by them also for guarding this road from

the south. The range of hills on the opposite side of the vale of Eden to the south has also been guarded at any little pass that presented itself, though it was not requisite to be so strict, as the northern passes were most exposed to the inroads of the Caledonians.

There is a wild and romantic glen about a mile west from Orea, that divides the West Lomond hill from the Bishophill, called Glenveal, through which a little rivulet runs to the north over freestone rock, forming several beautiful cascades. As there has been, and still is, a road leading up the east side of that glen, even this pass has not been forgotten to be guarded, as one of their little round forts lies yet in ruins in the mouth of the pass, above one of the windings of that little water, and close by the road-side; the stones lying around a heathy eminence, appearing white among the dark heath, though a great many of them seem to have been taken away.

Those who may visit Orea will find it also worth their trouble to go west and see the ruins of this little fort, as it is seen to better purpose, and a more distinct idea of the nature and extent of these forts may be formed from it, than by viewing the ruins on the tops of little hills or laws, as they appear to be in general all demolished in these places, sometimes the foundations only being visible. and sometimes not even these.

The effects of a subterraneous eruption of water from the hill above may also be seen near this. It burst forth from near the top of the hill, about

two or three years ago, bringing down an immense quantity of considerably large stones and rubbish, covering the whole side of the verdant hill, almost down to the little water at the bottom, called the Glen burn. Another of these watery eruptions or explosions, above twenty-five years ago, burst forth from the middle hill betwixt the two Lomonds, on a Sabbath day, with a tremendous noise, as loud as the report of a cannon; and though there was by no means so much rubbish brought down as by the one on the west side, yet such a quantity of water burst out, that, if the people had not run and opened the sluice of their threshing-mill dam, it threatened to have inundated the farmstead of Kilgour.

About mid-way, and near to where this phenomenon took place, betwixt the west and east Lomond hills, there is a small pass or strait foot path crossing from north to south, called the Arrities; and even this has not been neglected to be guarded, as there has been one of these small forts standing at the head of it, now forming a beautiful verdant conical little hill, evidently artificial, and finely seen from the north of the vale of Eden, and also at a considerable distance, now called the Maiden Castle. This is directly up, and south from the farmhouse of Kilgour, where the parish church of Falkland once stood, although about two miles west from it, and where the minister's glebe still is, which is now let to the farmer in Kilgour. There is a free stone coffin that has lain many years beside the burying ground, in which it is generally said the body



of David, Duke of Rothsay, son of Robert the Second, was buried, who was starved to death in one of the vaults of Falkland Palace by his unnatural uncle. If it be so, either he had not been very tall in stature, or else his body had been contracted by the cruel and lingering death he underwent. On the north side of the vale at Auchtermuchty, there is a kind of two passes or roads to the north, both of which appear also to have been guarded. On the old road to Newburgh there is a high rocky eminence, with a broad flattish top, naturally strong, called Craig-ouris, or rather Craig-our-house, that appears to have been well fortified with ramparts of earth thrown up in all the places any way accessible. As it rises gradually from the south, there has been a strong rampart of earth thrown up betwixt and the arable land; and near to this rampart, a man in Auchtermuchty, a good many years ago, when casting divots, (*i. e.* cutting thin broad turf for putting on the ridge or top of the houses), found a Roman dart or javelin; and, though I never saw it, yet, from the description, it must have been bronze. It was said to have been a blackish metal, though not iron.—The other road or pass was up the course of the water from the north; and this appears to have been guarded both by that high rocky eminence a little to the north-east, naturally fortified on all sides, and also by one called the Herle Law; this is also a very commanding situation, and has an extensive view. There is also the greatest probability that there had been one of these forts on the top of that

beautiful knoll, or eminence, standing at the mill-dam in that romantic situation, and in the very mouth or gorge of the pass by which the road to Newburgh now goes. About two miles to the north-west, and a little east from the head of the glen of Abernethy, where five or six roads meet, there seems to have been another one built on a round little hill or eminence, on the extremities of the lands of Wester Colsie, called the Round Know, though now also demolished with the plough. The roads meet near a stone called the Thirle Stone, from a round hole drilled in it resembling the print of a camel's foot, evidently artificial, though the stone is a hard whin stone. The standard for regulating the weights of a large fair, once belonging to Abernethy, is said to have been inserted into this hole, when the fair stood here,—or, as others say, the weights for weighing the wool stood fixed in this hole.

About half a mile farther east, upon the farm of Wester Colsie, where two cross roads meet, another Roman fort lies in ruins, of considerable extent, though less now than formerly. The hills or rising grounds a little west of this begin to divide and to assume the appearance of an amphitheatre; and particularly the hill to the south, just opposite to this, has the appearance of terraces or seats, running round the arena of an amphitheatre. The grand amphitheatre erected by Vespasian at Rome was built only a few years previous to this, called the Coliseum. It is very natural then to suppose, that, whenever an opportunity occurred, or when

there was a fort built in any place similar in appearance, which might recal to mind this grand and stupendous work, the Romans would very readily confer the name upon that fort to keep up its remembrance. Accordingly, it obviously appears that the name of the Coliseum had been originally given to this fort, which we have evidently yet retained in the name of the farm-town contiguous, called Wester Colsie. I well recollect that, when at school, the son of the person who at that time occupied the farm in this place, who was then also at school, told me that one of his father's servants found a small silver coin amongst the stones in the ruins of this place resembling a sixpence; and, though I never saw it, it must obviously have been one of the small silver coins of Titus or Domitian, which were very current at the period of its early erection. These ruins lie midway betwixt a new house lately built, and a beautiful bank of larix-firs to the south-east. I am the more confirmed in my conjecture as to the original name of this fort, from another farm-town, above a mile east, called Easter Colsie, or Collisie, where there appear the ruins of another Roman fort that stood a little behind the old farm-house, around which the little green eminence assumes the appearance of a natural amphitheatre; and, though two farms intervene betwixt it and the other Colsie, called Pitmedden and Ræmoir, yet so full had they been of the grand Coliseum, that, whenever the least appearance of an amphitheatre presented itself near any of these forts, they had not been slack in con-

ferring this name upon it, as this evidently appears to have been called Easter Coliseum. The ruins of this are still visible, for any thing I know to the contrary. They were so in my younger years,—this being well known ground,—as my pleasant paternal inheritance lay contiguous to this on the west; and, though not the place of my nativity, (which was in the heart of the still more pleasant and fertile Strathearn), I passed many a happy and youthful day here, under the guardianship of one of the best of fathers, nay, I may add, one of the most excellent of the human race. But little did I then know that my lot was cast on such famed and classic ground, or that I was stationed betwixt two such famed and illustrious names of antiquity, as the Eastern and Western Coliseum of Roman origin, else I would have paid more frequent visits to them for their names sake. But alas! what a vast contrast betwixt the ruins of these and those of their prototype, which is one of the most celebrated amphitheatres of antiquity, along with that at Verona, to be found in all Italy, or any where else. This little fort at Easter Colisie, or Colsie, had been placed to guard the pass to the north, the nearest way to Newburgh, and another little road meets near it. It also had a most extensive and commanding view, directly looking down upon the forts at Auchtermuchty, and communicating with them. There are also two towns of the name of Eastern and Western Colzium, about thirteen or fourteen miles south west from Edinburgh, which names are still more near the

original name of Coliseum, which seems obviously to have been imposed upon them from the same cause; as I understand, from good authority, that there is also the appearance of a grand natural amphitheatre near them, amongst the hills; and no doubt they would also have Roman forts near them, from whence they obviously had derived their names.

It has been my destiny hitherto to be generally stationed amidst Roman forts, these venerable ruins of antiquity. I was born in the vicinity of one erected to guard the passage of the Earn; and in the sight of other six or seven, along with the view of the Pictish kings' two palaces or castles, without changing position. I was brought up for a time betwixt two of far famed and illustrious names, and in view of other four or five, and now reside in the very midst of the camp occupied by Agricola, after fighting the interesting and far famed battle of Meralesford, or the Lomond hill, so long and anxiously sought after; also in the immediate view of a Roman town, and surrounded with thirteen or fourteen Roman forts, either in sight or within less than three miles distance. It must surely have been in virtue of this last place of residence, that I had been inspired with the desire, and been aided in attempting to put matters to rights in this point of view, in a manner never hitherto attempted.

Although the Romans seem in general to have well guarded all the roads or passes to the south, yet there is one to the south-east of Abernethy, that appears never to have been guarded, not appearing so much at first sight to need it. By this

road I have travelled many hundred times, but never could perceive any vestige or ruins of a Roman fort this being our road to the parish kirk and school, and possessing one of the most delightful views to be found in all Great Britain. \*

The Caledonians are said to have made an irruption into the Roman province about the year 117, being the first of Adrian's reign ; and their first exploit was to demolish a number of the Roman fortresses built between the two friths. " Adrian, " hearing of these commotions, appoints Julius " Severus governor of Britain ; but, before he had " time to do any thing, he is suddenly recalled, " and sent elsewhere ; but, the Caledonians continuing their ravages, this brings Adrian himself " down in person. As soon as they hear of his arrival, they relinquish the country they were possessed of, and retire to the north. Adrian, however, advances as far as York, where he meets " some of Agricola's old soldiers that had been " with him in the northern parts, who, by holding " out the difficulties he would have to surmount, " and the small advantages that would comparatively accrue to the empire, even should his undertakings be crowned with success, divert him " from pursuing his expedition. Wherefore, he " resolves to leave to the Caledonians all the country between the two friths and the Tyne, in hopes, " by thus enlarging their boundaries, to keep them " quiet. But, at the same time, in order to secure " the Roman province from their incursions, he " causes a rampart of earth to be thrown up, cover-

“ed with turf, from the mouth of the Tyne to the “Solway Frith, in length about eighty miles.” This was converted into a wall built of free-stone, about ninety years afterwards, by the Emperor Severus, generally upon the rampart formerly raised by Adrian, and must not be confounded with the wall raised by Lollius Urbicus, only about twenty-three years after, or about the year 140, under Antoninus Pius, along the narrow isthmus where Agricola had formerly erected his fortresses. It strikes me that the Caledonians, in this eruption, had got through this last mentioned pass, perhaps unobserved, as it seemed the least guarded; and there is a farm town immediately below, or contiguous to it, called Gatawa, or Gataway. The Abernethians, therefore, speaking of this expedition, would say, that they (the body of Caledonians), “gat a’ “awa’,” or “all got off,” perhaps unobserved, or unmolested, through this pass; and after having once got through it, and keeping in the hollows, after surprising one or two solitary forts, and killing those in the garrisons, they might penetrate a far way through the Roman province, to the south of these two lines of forts, and commit havoc enough.

There is also a sort of pass by the west side of the hill of Gataway; but this appears to have been guarded with a small fort, whose ruins once stood, and I suppose yet stand (unless demolished since the commonty was lately divided), on the west side of the little water of Nethy, above what is called the linns, or water falls, and on the side of the road to Wester Colsie. Something more than a mile to

the eastward, and nearly opposite to where the town of Abernethy once extended, there is another pretty wide pass betwixt two considerably high hills ; and, though one of them is arable on the top, and the other has been so at a very early period, yet they present bold rounded fronts to the north. As a road goes up by the side of each, they appear to have been guarded by a fort in the centre betwixt them, on the height above Greenside, and another on the west side of the little water. These had been styled Forts Greensides, or *Viridi Lati*, from their being contiguous to these hills, presenting their beautifully verdant or green sides, and from which the two farms adjacent obviously take their names of Easter and Wester Greensides. These two unfrequented roads meet together a little above where they are joined by the one on the west of the hill, where, meeting with three other roads from the three farms on the south side, and one very ancient one leading across the hill, all at one point, they are called, from that singular circumstance, *the Seven Gates* or roads.

A very little to the westward of this, and on the north side of the cross road, another fort had stood, called Puries Know, or Knoll, perhaps from one Spurius who had the command of it, and which was a name frequent amongst the Romans. This one had been erected, not only to guard the assemblage of all these roads, but also to observe the passage of the Earn, and to communicate with the fort at Carpow, and the forts Greensides, upon all



which it directly looks down ; so that, when ever a body of the enemy was observed passing there, the soldiers stationed there might give the alarm to the chain of forts along the high grounds to the east and west, as also to the three at Auchtermuchty to the south-east. The situation of this fort is worthy of observation, being upon a small plain, though pretty elevated, with the grounds rising a little around it to the east, north, and west ; so that, standing at its base, you neither see the Seven Gates, nor the passage of the Earn, but, by stepping forward a few paces either way, you see both distinctly ; so that it had been built as high as to have a view of both at the same time. It is still further remarkable, that the site of it has no view of any of the forts either to the east or west ; but coming past it very lately from viewing some of these forts to the eastward, I observed, a very little east from this, a pretty elevated spot near the road, in a free open situation, having a few stones on the top of it in the form of a square, and some turf or earth above it, drawn to a point evidently artificial. Though this attracted my notice, yet I could not fully comprehend the meaning of it, till I came west to the fort, and observed that, though it was in full view of the passage of the Earn, yet it was out of sight of any of the forts of Beins Law and Round Know, &c. to the west, and the Black Cairn and Normans Law, &c. to the east. It then struck me at once, that this had been the place for erecting the signal or alarm posts to these other forts, of which it had

a full view. Unfortunately, however, we have to lament, that this one seems to be about to share the fate of most of the rest. I observed with regret, that some person, while building a small toft of houses a little to the north of it, since the division of commonty belonging to Abernethy, has found out this, and has grubbed up all the stones from the very foundation, which are all lying loose, in a large mass, ready to be carried away. Though I did not measure it, yet the area of its foundation seemed to be about ninety feet in circumference. There are some small flat cairns where the inhabitants had buried their dead, a little to the north, in one of which, I recollect, when a boy at school, I wrought about two hours to get to the bottom ; but, having no assistance, or any other instrument but my hands for throwing out the stones, I made but little progress, and was obliged to desist before coming to the bottom. I believe it still remains as I left it about forty years ago ; but, had I then supposed it to be a Roman cairn, I certainly would have persevered to the last to see what was in it, or in what manner they had buried their dead.

On the east side of that high hill called the hill of Greenside, there is another very narrow and steep pass, or ravine, directly above Carpow, called Dovan's Den ; and, though this and the other passes to the west and south are in the commonty belonging to Pitmedden, yet I do not recollect whether this has been guarded at the mouth or north entry, or not ; but there has obviously been one on

the top of the hill on the west side, which would both serve for this purpose, and also on account of its height (being seen at a great distance by its beautiful sloping sides) be fit for communicating with the high fort to the eastward, above Newburgh, called the Black Cairn, and also with Norman's Law, nearer to Dundee, still higher. There are the vestiges of a few small houses on the base of this, in which the garrison soldiers no doubt would lodge, not being on so exposed a situation.

A little to the south or head of this narrow pass, where it crosses the foresaid road across the hill, called the Seven Gate Road, there had been another small fort erected at the head of a den called the Green Den; also a little south of this another small flat cairn points out where they had buried their dead; and on the north of this, in a hollow, wettish, swampy bog, a long row of pretty large stones has been laid obviously by the hands of the Romans, by way of stepping stones, for communicating with the forts to the north, as it is not probable that any other people would lay these in such a wild sequestered place. On the road below this pass on the north, the two ancient sites of the Pictish kings palaces, both called the Castle Laws, the one near Abernethy, and the other about five miles further off, on the hills to the westward, are finely seen all the way from Newburgh to the end of Abernethy town. By the edge of a hill intervening, the view of the one above Ecclesia M'Grigger hill is lost sight of; so that the Pictish kings, when residing

there, would only have a view of the eastern half of their capital. These palaces are very similar now in their appearance, forming beautiful verdant conical tops, and evidently quite different buildings from the Roman forts,—being both a vast deal larger, and having more substantial walls.

About half a mile east of Carpow, on the north side of the old road, in a situation a little elevated, amongst a clump of trees, there also appear the foundations of another round fort for guarding the low road by Mugdrum and Newburgh. Nearly a mile south of this, very near M'Duff's cross, other two forts had stood to guard that important pass, which was then the principal road to Cupar in Fife. One of these stood on a little round hill or eminence on the north side of the road, not above fifty yards east from the pedestal of M'Duff's cross, and admirably adapted for guarding the road which passes directly betwixt this and another little eminence a little westward, on which the other had been erected to guard the road from Auchtermuchty; but now both are unfortunately demolished by the plough. It is but only very lately too that this has been effected, being only a few years since the commonly was divided; and the account I had of the largest one on the north side of the road was, that, though the eminence is obviously natural, yet there evidently had been some building upon it, as the foundation seemed quite entire. As the ground is of a loose channely nature, it had been paved all around the top of the round hill; but, alas! all are now re-

moved, and levelled by the plough. I perceive, however, that the pedestal, on which the cross of M'Duff was inserted, is still left standing in its ancient site, though the ground is now laboured all around it. This cross is now universally known to have been erected by King Malcom Canmore, almost eight hundred years ago, commemorative of M'Duff, the Thane of Fife, having slain Macbeth, the usurper and tyrant; and, on this cross, the nature or explanation of one of the four grants said to be given to him is said to have been inserted. One of these grants is generally allowed to have been the honour of carving at the King's table; another, the honour of placing the crown on the King's head at his coronation; a third, to lead the King's armies to battle; and the fourth and last, that if any of his kin, even to the ninth degree back, should be guilty of the unpremeditated slaughter of any gentleman, by paying twenty-four merks as a fine,—and if a plebeian, twelve merks of silver,—and flying to this cross as an asylum, and washing his hands, he was to get free, upon paying also nine kine and a colpindach, by which I suppose is meant what is called a quey, or a young cow that never had a calf. These, as tradition, and the oldest people thereabouts say, (but which has never been mentioned by any author that I have seen hitherto,) had to be brought to the stone and tied to it; and then the person had also to go down about a mile to the tall upright stone that yet stands a little west from the house of Mugdrum, and blow a horn; and, if he got this done

before the kine and colpindach were loosed, he got quite free; but, if the kine and colpindach were loosed before he got this done, then his right to this privilege was to be disputed or called in question. This tradition appears to receive some countenance from the nature of the stone or pedestal yet standing, (a square block of freestone), which obviously appears to have had ten holes drilled into it artificially, for inserting iron rings fixed in by bats of lead. Some of these are yet so deep that, though you thrust in your middle finger, it scarcely reaches the end of the perforation; and also the marks of the chissel are clearly seen in the edge of some of them in trying to get out the rings and lead. The tradition of the place, among the best informed, still further bears that, when any persons came there who had been supposed guilty of a more atrocious crime than accidental manslaughter, and who claimed this privilege, the country people, amongst whom certainly would be the relatives of the deceased, usually collected upon a little round hill only about 200 yards east from the stone, well provided with stones, with which they pelted the person coming to the asylum, who was obliged to pass that way, as this was the direct road from Fife. It is added that some were so severely handled that they died before they reached the stone, which may perhaps account for several small *tumuli* or graves, being formerly seen near the cross. The name given to this eminence is the Croucher Know, or Knoll, from the persons that awaited the coming of those flying

to the asylum, crouching down or stooping, in order the more to conceal themselves. But, in order the more to favour their escape from those lying in wait with stones, and to give them every chance for their life, the road, about four feet broad, was paved all the way from this to the cross, with round rough stones, which are partly still remaining, but where the plough has been they are all turned up. It is generally agreed that it was the Reformers who took this stone cross down as a relic of superstition, on their way from Perth to Cupar and St Andrews; and some suppose that high stone near Mugdrum to be the very one that was the stone cross inserted in this pedestal. If it be so, their zeal had been more moderate than is generally represented, in being satisfied with only breaking off the cross from the top; but which, if it had been violently thrown down, would have undoubtedly broken to pieces, as it is a thin flat stone about two feet broad and one foot thick. It is square in the edges, and, though seemingly mutilated in the top, stands about thirteen or fourteen feet high, with some hieroglyphics of men and horses, something like the obelisk at Aberlemno in Angus. The old road went past this stone about thirty or forty years ago, but it now stands a little west from the new house of Mugdrum, in a thicket of trees; and is certainly worth a visit from the curious, as it is obviously of great antiquity, coeval at least with Macduff's cross, and I suppose must be connected with it. Some even say that this was the stone on which

the inscription formerly alluded to was written, the substance of which has been given; and, as some of my readers may never have seen it, I shall here also insert it, as it is certainly a curiosity, though a barbarous jargon, being neither Latin (only a few words excepted), nor Saxon, Scots, nor English.

Maldraradrum dragos maleria largia largos  
 Spolando spadōs sive nig fig, gnippite gnaros,  
 Lauria lauriscos, lauringen láuria luscōs.  
 Et columburtos, et sic tibi curcia curtos  
 Exitus et baradrum, sive lim, sive lam, sive labrum,  
 Propter Magidrum, et hoc oblatum  
 Ampī smileridum, súper limpide, lampide labrum.

About half a mile west from Macduff's cross is a cairn of stones lying on the side of the road, called Sir Robert's Cairn, from the circumstance of Sir Robert Balfour of Denmiln being killed there in a duel with Sir James Macgill of Lindores. They were very intimate companions, though Sir Robert was a stout young man in his prime, and Sir James considerably more advanced in years. They had been both at Perth in a summer day along with their servants. Sir Robert, it seems, had been a little in his cups, and had quarrelled and fought with a Highland chieftain in the South Street. Sir James coming up at the time, though he was somewhat little in stature, yet, being an expert swordsman, made them desist. Observing to Sir



Robert, in a jocular manner, that the Highland chief would have done for him in a few minutes if he had not separated them, Sir Robert's blood fired, and he offered to fight Sir James himself. They returned home in the afternoon ; and, when at Carpow, they made their servants take the low road, and they went the muir road ; and at the place where the cairn is raised, they fought. Sir James by this time had cooled, and, perhaps, conscious of his superiority to Sir Robert, wished to avoid it at first, and to have no hand in hurting him. Sir Robert fought like a madman. A shepherd sitting a little above them was not only so near as to witness, but even to hear what passed ; he heard Sir James call out to Sir Robert twice, " O my dear Sir Robert, do not force me to kill thee ; I'll be obliged to kill you in my own defence if you do not stop." This, it seems, only enraged Sir Robert the more. Sir James then made a thrust or lounge, in order to wound his sword arm at the shoulder, that he might disable him ; but Sir Robert, in parrying the thrust, or rather while dealing about him so furiously, struck the sword, and drove it into his own throat, by which his windpipe was so effectually cut that he fell down and expired almost instantaneously. Sir James then threw his cloak over the body, and rode off. Their servants, it seems, had been suspecting some mischief, for they were all on the alert ; and a man of the name of Robert White, who was pulling thistles on Carpow Bank, observ-

ed the servants standing in their stirrups, looking up most eagerly, but who could not well see them, being in a sort of hollow. When they perceived Sir James ride off alone, they immediately knew there was something wrong, and then, as fast as they could, they rode up the nearest way through the growing corn. This man followed them, and there they found Sir Robert quite dead. It is through the shepherd and this Robert White that these particulars are so minutely handed down, though it is a long time since the transaction, being, as nearly as can be ascertained, in the year 1679,—a memorable year, being that in which Archbishop Sharpe was killed in Magus Muir, and also that in which the battle of Bothwell Bridge was fought. Sir James immediately went up to London in order to procure his pardon, which, it seems, the king (Charles II.) offered to grant him, upon condition of his fighting an Italian gladiator or bravo,—or, as he was then called, a bully,—which, it is said, none could be found to do. Sir James undertook to do it, though perhaps he might think the conditions of obtaining his pardon hard enough. Accordingly, a large stage was erected for the exhibition before the King and Court, and, no doubt, also before an immense collection of spectators. Sir James, it is said, stood on the defensive till the bully had spent himself a little, being a taller man than Sir James. In his mighty gasconading and bravadoing, he actually leaped over the knight as if he would swallow him alive; but, in attempting

to do this a second time, Sir James run his sword up through him, and then called out, “ I have “ spitted him, let them roast him who will.” This not only procured his pardon, but he was also knighted on the spot. I have given him his title before he earned it, but it was that he might be on a par with his former antagonist. Sir James’s son was also a noted swordsman, and from him the present heiress of Nether Rankeillor in Fife is lineally descended.

A high peaked hill a little to the eastward, the base of which nearly extends to the Cross M'Duff, as it is usually called, has had another Roman fort upon the top of it. This is called the Black Cairn, and has been a strong post, having had a strong rampart of stones running round a little below the top for nearly a mile, which stones are mostly lying as the Romans left them, only loosened and spread out a little, and now turned grey, or rather white, with age and moss ; this seems to have been the strength and security of the fortress, if not the extent of it. The fort is also lying in ruins on the top, and evidently has been a building, though not of such extent as I expected. Though the hill is almost 1000 feet above the level of the Tay on the north side, rising pretty steep up from the town of Newburgh, stretching along its base for near a mile, yet it rises more gradually from the south, and has been ploughed near the top and within the rampart, as the marks of the ridges are quite visible. This, again, has had a communication with

another still stronger fortress called Clatshard Craig, considerably lower, and nearly a mile east. The Romans had been at uncommon pains in fortifying this, as its situation would be of great importance for guarding that important pass from Newburgh to Cupar-Fife, and also two roads leading south through Fife by the Loch Lindores, one at each end of it. It rises pretty high from the south, and also abruptly from the west, though not so high on that side, and terminates in a high perpendicular rock, I suppose fully 120 feet high, fronting the east, and directly looking down upon the road that passed, till only lately, very near it. The top, containing a considerable space of ground, and also a well in the rock, has been uncommonly well fortified by four very strong ramparts of earth and stone, drawn round, with proportionally deep fosses, on the south and west, till they reach the perpendicular rock on the north and south-east sides; so that in these days it might be reckoned almost impregnable. A rampart of earth is also distinctly seen, extending down from the stone rampart on the Black Cairn, and running east on the top of the hill facing the north all the way till it joins the ramparts on the north edge of Clatshard, nearly a mile distant, which is now a good deal levelled. The etymology of the name of this rock may be derived from the circumstance of the Romans possessing it. The word *clat* is yet used, though obviously a very ancient word, when a horse is in the habit of pawing or striking a person down with his

fore feet, as all the dragoon horses are usually taught to do ; he is said to clat one down, namely, when the stroke comes from above upon the head. Now, as the road went so near the rock that a stone detached from the top could easily knock one down or kill him, the Romans might sometimes, and very readily would do this upon the enemy, or on any persons they wished to stop in passing. This might make the natives remark “ that these Romans with their stones from their “ rock *clats-hard*,” thus giving a name to it which it still retains. There is a large square mass like a huge pillar, which, though not basaltic, rises perpendicular in front of the rock, and detached from it, presenting rather a threatening appearance. This stone, it is said, Thomas the Rhymer prophesied was to fall upon a man riding past on a white horse, and kill him. Although the new road to Cupar is now a little removed from the foot of the rock, so that Sir Thomas has now more the chance of turning out a false prophet, yet, as the old road continues still open, and many yet take it, the threatening aspect of the rock has often had, and still continues to have, a powerful impulse in causing many to quicken their pace in going past it, whatever the colour of the horse may be, lest Sir Thomas should have perchance mistaken the colour of the horse that is doomed to be the ill-fated one. About sixty years ago, and in the memory of many people yet alive, a boy of the name of *Robert Kid*, when herding cattle upon the back

of this rock, happening one morning to be sitting on the top of it supping his porridge out of a round wooden plate, the plate chanced to slip out of his hand and roll down a gentle declivity, just above the immediate brink of the rock; the boy not willing to lose his porridge so easily, made a hasty descent down the declivity to recover it before it got over the verge; but being too eager to recover it, or perhaps not imagining that he was so near the brink, over he and the plate went together down the tremendous precipice; but very fortunately his cloak happened to be so well fixed about his neck and breast, that the wind getting under it made it spread out like a pair of wings, by which he was somewhat buoyed up, and the rapidity of his aerial flight a little retarded. Still more providentially, when near the foot of the rock, in his descent, the corner of his cloak took hold of a bush growing out of the crevices of the rock, by which his fall was so effectually broken, that he escaped quite unhurt, getting off only with a good fright.

There is also another beautiful rock down in the hollow, but in the other side of this pass, of a beautiful conical form, quite insulated or detached from any other, something of a pyramidal form, having a round flat top, with a narrow ridge for an entrance to it. This rock, called the Mair or More Craig, though obviously natural, yet has something of an artificial appearance, and has not been neglected to be embraced as a most important one for

building a fort upon, the foundation and dimensions of which are very distinctly seen from the top of Clatshard, being considerably elevated above it, with the little water, issuing from the Loch of Lindores, running betwixt them down past the extensive ruins of the abbey of the same name, to join the Tay. Something less than a mile east from this, on the extremity of the farm of Parkhill, about nine years ago, there was a considerable quantity of ancient silver coins, with some gold chains and bracelets, turned up, contained in a hollow red freestone vessel coarsely hewn out, something larger than a breakfast cup, with a cover on the mouth of it, adapted to it. The coins were mostly adhering together by corrosion; but a considerable number were also very clear, and in excellent preservation; and though not Roman but English coins, yet obviously of great antiquity. I saw six of these lately, two of which were beautifully clear and fine silver coins of Canute,—or, as he was stiled, Canute the Great,—the second Danish king that reigned in England; and, as he began to reign in the year 1017, it is now 805 years since. One of these I have in my possession, in excellent preservation, apparently very little worn; and the cutting round the edges seems to be as fresh and new as if it had been only done a year ago. On the obverse, it has the king's head pretty neatly engraven, with a sceptre held up before his face; and on his head a tiara, not like a crown, but rather in the form of a triangle, like the Pope's turban; and on his breast a

coat of mail, with his name, a contraction for Canute, CNVT. REX. ANGL. not very legible : On the reverse there is a cross with a pellet in each angle, and one in the centre, as in most of the ancient English coins ; but the letters around are so indistinctly engraven, that I cannot well decypher them. The other four coins, though not so good silver, yet appear still more ancient ; but no person that has ever yet seen them can decypher the letters around them. The gold chains were rather of a slender make ; but a sight of these I could not procure, as the person that once possessed them lent them out for inspection, and they could never be recovered again, being too long forgot to be looked after. These coins were found at a place called Wallace's Den, where tradition yet marks the very rill that runs down through that hollow, or over the very spot (being a spring well, but now covered with the plough), where it is said Wallace drank after the bloody engagement he had with Sir John Psewart, the English general ; and declared that the wine of France, from whence he had lately returned, was never half so good,—adding,

At many a bloody bout I've been ;  
But such a bloody bout as this I've never seen.

About sixty years ago, a man, when casting divots close by the place, also turned up a sword ;—all which prove incontestibly that this is the place where the battle was fought. This battle



was called the Battle of Blackironside, or rather Earnside; and this farther proves that the Earn only ran past this way at that period; for if the Tay had then joined the Earn where it now does, as it is by far the most noble river of the two, it would rather have been denominated the battle of Tayside. Sir John Psewart had been lying with his men, amounting to about two thousand, on the top of Clatshard, in these strong entrenchments previously formed by the Romans; and when Wallace came past, with only fifty men attending him, evidently not aware that the English were so near him, the English soon perceived him passing, and came so suddenly down upon him, that he had scarce time to fly into the wood called the Wood of Blackearnside, and fortify himself the best way he could with a few trees erected by way of a barricadoe, or barass, as it is called in his history, and there await the attack of the English; where the few heroes that were with him behaved so well that they killed a good number of their assailants, fifty being left dead at one point of attack only. It was here, also, that Sir Thomas de Longueville, or the Red Keaver as he was previously called, won his spurs, having fought so gallantly that he not only procured the esteem and favour of Wallace, but was taken into his confidence, and was ever afterwards of great service to him in all his after exploits. Wallace, for a considerable time, was obliged, from his great disparity of numbers, to act on the defensive; but, during

the action, a reinforcement of 300 men joined him from the north, by crossing the Earn. All these facts still further confirm that it had been after this period that the junction of these rivers took place, where they presently do. After this seasonable reinforcement, though there was still a great disparity in their numbers, Wallace came out of the wood, and gave the English general battle, and he and all his men were cut in pieces ; not one, it is said, escaped the carnage. Now, it is highly probable, nay it almost amounts to a certainty, that it was part of the spoils taken from the English that fell in that bloody engagement that was so lately discovered ; and it is equally probable that these had belonged to the general himself ; for it is not probable that the common men would have gold chains or bracelets about them. If so, it goes well nigh also to establish that this Sir John had been a great antiquarian, else he would not have had such a collection of ancient coins about him ; as there appears to have been no scarcity of the then reigning King's coins current for paying the troops with, as will partly appear from what was lately discovered of them, which will be afterwards mentioned.

These passes at the east and west end of Loch-indores also appear to have been guarded, one on that eminence placed in the centre of the entry to the south, on the west side at Berryhole, and another on the hill on the west side of the pass where the two roads meet on the south side ; another also,

if not two, is situated at the entry to the east one by Cairney Hall, as its name imports,—Cairn or Cairney always having a reference to some one or other of these artificial buildings, either when standing or in ruins. On the south entry to this narrow pass, and through which now the new road is made from the south coast to Newburgh, another one had stood on that pointed eminence on the farm of Braeside, near which a large upright stone yet stands. Down again a little to the south-east of this, contiguous to the village of Collessie, the ruins of another one yet stand. It appears to be a little encroached upon, having been originally much about the size of the one at Wester Colsie, 200 feet in circumference. It stands a little south-east of the parish church of Collessie, on the farm of the Newton of Collessie, in the form of a beautiful artificial Law, in the angle where three roads meet. The old road from Cupar to Kinross, till of late, went this way, and another one up to, or past this village, on the east. Here, again, circumstances concur in fully establishing this fort to have been named in honour of the celebrated Coliseum, and from which the name of the village and parish is obviously derived, as it was as often spelled with two *l*'s as with one; and, indeed, the modern name comes as near the ancient one as could possibly be expected, one letter *s* as a redundancy being the only difference. The place from which it had derived its original name, or which had suggested it, is a most stupendous work,

a little to the south, in the form of a vast amphitheatre; but whether it be natural or artificial is difficult to determine. It goes round, for almost the space of a mile, in the form of a spacious amphitheatre, by a stupendous bulwark of earth and small round stones, which are very abundant in the place, raised, as it were, above another natural eminence of considerable height. It is generally supposed to be artificial; and there was a fort,—though I suppose not a Roman one,—that had stood in the centre of the amphitheatre on a gentle eminence, in the midst of a morass, which is now all turned into arable land. Tradition says that this fort long stood out against some enemy, though it is not said who it was; and that this bulwark was raised to stem or keep back a little rivulet that had ran down by the west side of the fort, until it was so much raised as to inundate the fort, and make the garrison surrender, or otherwise to drown them; but that, after it had accumulated to a great height, the pressure of such a body of water upon the rampart made it give way with a tremendous and overwhelming influence, where the neck or outlet of the water is at present, and where, it is said, it ‘gaed down’ or went down, where the little farm-steading of the Gaddon is now built, taking its name from the words *gaed down*. The enemy, against whom this fort made such a noble defence, obviously appears to have been Edward I. as is apparent from a great number of his small silver coins found lately in the vicinity of this, with some

also of the kings that preceded him, one or two of which I have procured ; but, as they are so common, I shall not trouble the reader with any description of them here, only that some of them had been coined in Berwick, and some in London. If the bulwark, in form of an amphitheatre, be artificial, which I have never yet examined, though I have passed it often, it must have been raised by the Romans themselves, in my humble opinion ; and yet for what ostensible purpose, is difficult to conjecture ; for it is scarcely probable that Edward would have been at the trouble of raising such an immensely large work only for the purpose of reducing a small and inconsiderable fort ; and, after all his trouble, the success of it would be uncertain, as, according to the tradition, it actually turned out to be. The English might no doubt build it up at the neck or out-let, for the purpose mentioned ; but that they built the whole of it, supposing it to be artificial, I can by no means agree to.

About a mile west from the fort at Collessie, on the south side also of the same road, and near where another crosses it from the village of Kinloch from the south, the site of another Roman fort is found, apparently from the appearance of its foundation of a square form. This very fortunately is preserved and planted, from its being universally allowed to have been a fort of great antiquity, bearing the name of the Maiden Castle. This is now the third I have met with of this name ; and a

little to the westward of it there were lately dug up several Roman urns, half of one of which I have in my possession. It is of very coarse burnt clay, or rather pounded whinstone covered with a thin coating of clay, with some rude sculpture round the mouth of it, and of a considerably large size.

On the north side again, and nearly a mile south-east from the east end of Loch-indores, there has been another Roman fort on the height at where the old road to Cupar went east; and another pass or hollow went down to Monimail and Melville House, called Dilliecary Know, which has some resemblance to Castlecary, one of the forts in the wall built by Lollius Urbicus betwixt the friths of Forth and Clyde. A little south-east from Wallace's Den, and on the top of the height north from Highham,—or south from the old Castle of Ballenbriech, lying in ruins,—there has been another Roman fort, both to guard the road that came across the hill, and the one in the hollow to the south, by Denbog. It rises most beautifully above the rest of the hill in the form of a small round verdant conical hill, evidently artificial; and is seen at a great distance from Bein's Law, and those on the south-west hills. As I have hitherto given any anecdotes I collected in my researches worth insertion, I shall here mention an anecdote I had from an old man at the last mentioned old castle, now lying in noble ruins on the banks of the Tay, which took place at that castle, and seems to be well authenticated. It was a curious stratagem

well planned by one of the fair sex, and had the desired effect. Above two hundred years ago, a gentleman, called by the name of Earl Andrew, then lived in that castle, who is said to be a very wicked man; and the whole barony of Ballenbriech, which is pretty extensive, then belonged to him, though he now occupies only a very small space of ground in the church-yard of Flisk, though originally buried in the old kirk of Flisk. While he resided there, he claimed it as his right, as the Baronial Lord, to have the first night of every bride that was married in his barony. There was a young woman who lived up on the hill above, in a farm, I believe, called Cauldcotes, whose turn came to be married, but who was not willing to surrender up that right to him, which she considered as not belonging to him either by the divine or human laws. Accordingly, the night previous to her marriage, she went down to see Earl Andrew, taking with her a young calf and a pound of butter, by way of a present. The Earl was very complaisant, letting her see all the curiosities of the place, and among other things an instrument he had for fixing those that were obstreperous or non-compliant, to remind her of what she might expect. She got him persuaded to go into it himself, to see how it would answer, and immediately fixed him in it. She rubbed him well with the butter, and then, fastening the young calf upon him, left him in that predicament. This, according to the account, had the desired effect. She not only

escaped, but it is said it also fairly put an end to the practice for the future ; but, for the affront put upon him, the farm of Cauldcotes had to pay a wedder sheep to the castle annually, for a long time after, as a fine, which I suppose is now commuted into money.

A little to the south-east of this, there is another one on the top of a round detached hill called Logie Law, that had over-looked the Earn, and served to guard a hollow pass by the west side of it. A little farther south-east, there are also other two Roman forts, to guard a pass to Cupar in Fife, named Mount Tabor, and Lindamus. This last appears evidently by its name to be of Roman origin, which it appears to have retained pretty faithfully. A good way farther east on the north side of the hill, upon the farm of Fliskmillan, a most beautiful one stood, till very lately, to guard the narrow pass through the hill to Luthrie. This one stood pretty high, raised upon a natural base, and drawn into a beautiful flat top, where the fort had been built, having a sort of a winding road up to the top, something like a turnpike stair, from which it received from the country people the name of the Whirley-capes, or Whitelaw-capes. I understand, however, that this one was unfortunately lately demolished, under the superintendence of two neighbouring clergymen, imagining that some great antiquities would be found in it ; though nothing but some large human bones, partly burnt and partly calcined, were found. They did not suppose these



to be Roman, else I believe they would not have touched it. At least, I am sure as to one of them, had he ever supposed this to be a Roman fort, he would have held it inviolably sacred. Near this, Norman's Law rises, superior in height to all this ridge on the north of Fife, or even to any other in it, except the two Lomond Hills. A very strong fortress has been on the top of it, fortified round its summit by strong ramparts and entrenchments. The ramparts around the top are principally of stone, and have been originally very strong, forming a parallelogram, a little rounded at the corners, of about 44 paces, or 132 feet long, by about 80 feet broad, at an average.

There has also been a well on the south-east corner, and though previously considerably filled up, yet it was still of such considerable depth as to drown a cow lately in it; from which circumstance, and to prevent the like accidents for the future, it is now completely filled up with stones. In this early period, this fortress would be utterly impregnable, as it was also strongly fortified in every place where it was accessible on the sides of the hill. In full sight of this, in a hollow to the eastward, and a little south from the manse of Criech, there were, nigh six years ago, two very ancient small circles of stones, the one within the other, or two concentric circles connected, discovered and described by the Reverend Alexander Lawson, minister, Criech.

A more particular account of these will be found

in the *Edinburgh Magazine* for December 1817, p. 423. However, as some of my readers may never have had an opportunity of seeing the account referred to, I shall take a cursory view of it in passing, especially as I told the reverend gentleman, that, if I did insert the account of it in this work, I might also at same time take the liberty, in giving my opinion about it, to differ a little from the one there given. The larger circle consists of 32 stones, all free stone, at an average about a foot long, and not a foot elevated above the ground, all close beside each other, so that they are touching one another, having four larger stones, about a foot and a half high, exactly toward the four cardinal points, east, south, west, and north.

The inner or lesser circle consists of 16 stones, placed the same way as the outer one, and much about the same dimensions; having a round stone elevated about a foot exactly in the centre, and a pretty broad flag also of free stone, directly on the south side of this, and so contiguous that it is touching it, having a number of hieroglyphics cut out on the surface, and a number of human bones found under it. All these were found about three feet below the surface of the earth, in a dry ground, where the stones could not be supposed to sink much down. Now, the Druids' temples were generally, if not always, composed of 7, 9, or 10 large stones standing upright, and a little distant from one another.

This then is accurately and ingeniously describ-

ed there as a Druid's temple ; but to this I cannot give my assent ; but rather, in my humble opinion, it has been the cemetery or place where the High Priest or Arch-Druid has been buried, as the bones found under the flag stone seem to evince. The hieroglyphics cut on the surface, though a little rude, yet seeming in general to be pretty well executed, are first a pair of seemingly wooden shoes close together, obviously intended as emblematical of the shoes he had worn, or might be supposed, in these rude times, to need in the other world. There is also a dish cut out pretty naturally, in which he, when alive, had used either to drink in, or to eat his victuals out of, much resembling what is called in the country " a twa lugged cap ;" and was often found in country and farm-houses, till about thirty years ago, having broad triangular corners merging from the sides, and opposite to one another, for holding it by. I have seen one of these above a hundred years old. There is also a square flask or vessel for carrying either liquids or victuals in, with a loop cut out on the top for suspending it by a string thrust through the hole.

The rest of the hieroglyphics are all circular ; the ring of Odin is distinguished by a cross passing through its centre ; the other ones appear to be representations of the Sun, Moon, and Planets,—that for the Sun seems to be a pretty large circle complete,—that for the Moon somewhat less, and not complete ; but it appears to me to be a representation of the state that the Moon had been in when

the Arch-Druid had died, or had been buried, wanting about a 4th of being full Moon. Mr Lawson, however, deserves great credit for having preserved these circles so accurately, not only whole and entire, but also in the very identical position that each stone in these originally occupied ; having numbered all the stones before removing them, and placing them in their order in a clump of planting behind the manse, where they now stand, and are well worth a visit from the curious. Having accidentally seen Ure's History of Rutherglen and Kilbride, amongst other antiquities there described, I observed a stone that he takes notice of, called the Clochodrig-stone, from Clocho 'a Druagh, (signifying the Druid's Stone). Now, this is exactly the name given to a farm-town situate midway betwixt the two rocking-stones of Balvaire and Dron, being nigh equidistant, not a mile from either, and, I believe, from its high situation, in sight of both. The name of the farm is Clochoridg-stone, or more vulgarly the Clochorit-stone, which name it has obviously derived from these stones ; which plainly points out that these had been sacred to the Druids, and had been, if not placed in the positions they now occupy, yet used by these Druids to impose upon the ignorant people, and make them believe in their supernatural powers. The one on Dron Hill, I believe, though not so large as the other, yet still vibrates a little ; and the other, though about 10 or 12 ton weight,—and much in shape of a huge frog, sitting on its

hinder parts, and about to make a leap,—with a little trouble (two hours work of a man), would continue to vibrate or rock again. It is also further worthy of remark, that the little light blue bird called the Stone-chatterer, from its delighting to be amongst, and building its nest under stones,—or the White-ear, from the sides of its head or round its eyes being white—has also the name of the Clochoridge, or more vulgarly the Clochorit, obviously from Clocio ‘a Druagh, or the Druid’s Stone, from its having actually built its nest under these very Druids’ Stones; being well adapted for the purpose, being open all around except at the point of contact with the stone below, on which they rest. There would have been no propriety in giving it this name, if it had not been from this very circumstance.

A little north from the Manse of Criech, on the top of a conical hill, called from its verdant sides the Greenhill, there has also been a strong Roman fortress, strongly fortified with stone ramparts round the top and sides, and also the appearance of a well. About 200 yards farther north, among the arable land, and nigh the side of the old road leading west from the ferry at Dundee, the vestiges of another one are yet plainly visible, measuring about 106 feet round; this is also directly looking into the hollow pass betwixt two conical hills.

About other 200 yards farther north, and on the other side of the old road from Dundee, another one appears; this is called the Hundred

Headed Know, from the tradition that a hundred decapitated heads lie buried in it. The Reverend and learned Doctor, in the south-east corner of whose parish it stands, has suggested the idea, that the origin of this name may have been mistaken for the Hundredth Knoll or Eminence, having its top crowned or headed with one of these Roman forts ; as very probably these had been all numbered, and this was the hundredth in number. However, he is fully resolved to make the trial, to see and find any of these evidences of its origin ; or, if not found, we may warrantably conclude the other cause assigned to be the real origin of its name. About a gun-shot west from this, there has lately been a large flat cairn or cemetery partly opened, and several Roman urns found in it, two of which I saw ; and, though considerably less than those in general found, yet they are undoubtedly Roman ; and, though of coarse manufacture and sculpture, being only done with the nail of the thumb, yet they are of the same materials with the other Roman urns. When the other half of the cairn is opened, it is hoped more of these will be found, as this seems to have been the cemetery for the fort on Greenhill, and the other two on the old road, near this, directly looking down upon the Earn, and the wood of Flisk and Birkhill, or Corbie, the only remains now of the ancient wood of Black Earnside, extending formerly about nine miles in length, from Newburgh to Balmerino, and having an ancient abbey at each end, Lindores

on the west, and Balmurenach, or as it was anciently called in the Popish Chronicles, *Habitaculum ad Mare*, on the east. About this last mentioned place, there was lately found a small silver coin of Tiberius Nero, in very good preservation, which also I had a sight of. A little west from the Hundredth Headed Know, there are also very full and conspicuous vestiges of another Roman fort or fortress on the top of Drumnod Hill, for guarding the road on the south to Dundee Ferry from Edinburgh, and also a road going down on the north side towards the west.

Norman's Law, by its height, was well calculated for holding communication by signals with those high ones on the west, the Black Cairn and Greenside Hill, and also Bein's Law and Craig of Pittenbroigh to the south-west, and they again with those on the lower ridge, and in the hollow passes. There is also another beautiful fort, that rises high, with a fine conical top, to the south of this, near where the pass divides into three, the one going west by Collarney, another by Parbroath, and also another north by Luthrie. This one I understand is near Carphin; and from which the name of that house near it takes its name (Caer-phin). This is finely seen from the Black Cairn; and is also adapted, from its elevated situation, for communicating with those to the south-east and to the north of Cupar, viz the Cairneys, having roads passing betwixt each two of these, and conical topped hills near each of them, upon which these forts had been built, (viz. Hill Cairney, Myre's

Cairney, Lord's Cairney, and Murdo Cairney,) all which shew, as their names import, that there had been forts or artificial buildings near them. There was lately found a Roman urn, on that one above Myres Cairney. There had obviously been a fort on the top of that high topped hill above Foodie, and another, the vestiges of which are quite visible on Craigfoodie Hill, looking east to the Guard Bridge and St Andrews. To the east of Norman's Law, there had also been two forts at that elevated ridge called the Galrey. The two here were very ancient ones. They stood till lately, when they were taken down and levelled, when some bones and some ancient stone coffins were found near them. This was calculated for guarding that important pass to the north by Naughton and Birkhill, and within sight of Dundee Ferry.

This is now as far east as I have traced these forts on this north ridge; and, indeed, there would not be so much need for these any farther east; as the Tay would, even at that period, have joined the Earn a good way to the westward of this, and spreading into a broad estuary, an enemy could not so well cross it.

We now come to Cupar in Fife, a beautiful and ancient town in the vale of Eden, and standing on the left bank of a beautiful river of the same name. This seems obviously to have been an eminent Roman station, as the large Moat, a little to the north-west of the town, called the Moat Hill, or commonly called the Mute Hill, and various antiqui-



ties that have been found in the vicinity, abundantly demonstrate. This Moat Hill is unquestionably a most stupendous work of Roman antiquity, though unfortunately a little infringed upon; but enough still remains to point out its original design, and also to give some idea of the greatness of the work. It had been originally erected for guarding the two principal roads to the north and north-west of the town, having had a fort built upon the east end of it, on that high eminence looking down on the Lady Burn or St Mary's Water, to guard that road leading north and up the side of said water,—and then carried west for above two hundred yards, in something the form of a crescent, as a grand and stupendous promenade for the garrison soldiers,—till it ended in another fort that had been erected for guarding the road that had at that period led up by Balgarvie, branching into two a little above this; but it was removed to the westward about twelve years ago. From this road, passing through the middle of it, it had been carried west about other 200 yards, I suppose to be in sight of, and also to serve for guarding that road from the west, through the hollow of Fife. About 400 yards of it still remain, of considerable elevation, and upon the top of which two people can walk together with great ease; and, had it all been allowed to remain entire, it would have served for giving a pretty correct idea or model of the Roman wall betwixt Forth and Clyde, having forts built upon it at certain intervals. But unfortunately, not

supposing it to be Roman, the height on the east end is a good deal levelled on the top, though still standing pretty high ; and the one, if not two, in the middle, are entirely levelled, which stood about twenty feet high, of a beautiful conical form ; and a good part also of the wall or promenade is also levelled. The site of the castle, nigh the east end of the town, on a round elevated hill, in the angle where two roads entered the town from the east, points itself out as the site of the Roman fort for guarding the entrance from that quarter ; all which prove that it had been a town of considerable eminence even at that early period. Cupar boasts of being a town of great antiquity, as well it may ; for it seems to have been of greater antiquity than we are well aware of, and even to have been a town long before the Romans had any footing here. Whatever had been its original name, it seems plainly to have had its present one conferred upon it by the Romans, consisting of the same number,—nay, of the identical letters—of which its present name is made up, only a little transposed, Cupra instead of Cupar,—not Cuprum, which signifies copper ; and there are no copper mines near it, nor any thing of that nature from whence it could derive this name. Cupra then appears plainly to me to have been the name given it by the Romans, from a town of that name in Picenum, no doubt from the great resemblance they had viewed the one as bearing to the other,—both being on the left bank of a beautiful river, with

a lesser stream running into it, nearly at right angles, with the principal part of the town built in that angle. It is also something remarkable that Cupar-in-Angus answers exactly to this description, being on the left bank of a beautiful river with a lesser stream running into it, and the principal part of the town built in that angle betwixt them; only the Isla runs west, and the Eden runs east. Though we do not allow the Romans to have had any permanent settlement or footing be-north the Tay, (as neither does their own historian Tacitus), yet it is quite obvious that they have been at Cupar in Angus; as plainly appears from that remarkably large camp yet partly to be seen, though a good deal defaced, on the south-east of that town, and upon the site of which a considerable part of the town has been built; which plainly shews that it had been only the middle and north part of the town that existed, when the Romans were in that quarter. The camp is upon a very large scale, comprehending no less than eleven acres of ground; and evidently points itself out as having been one made by Severus, about the beginning of the third century, adapted for accommodating the large army he took with him in his northern expedition, in which he is said to have lost no less than 50,000 men; and his expedition was of no lasting advantage to him afterwards. Though we cannot suppose that the Romans lay so long there as to build that town, yet it is pretty obvious that they had lain so long as to have given

that name to it, either from its supposed resemblance to Cupar in Fife, or to the town of Cupra in Picenum, a province in Italy ; hence the Cuprenses are said to be the men or inhabitants of Cupra. It is plain to me, therefore, that both these towns had existed perhaps long before that period, and also that the greater part, if not all our towns of ancient Gaelic names then existed. Even Tacitus himself tells us that, after the attack at Loch-ore, or immediately before the great battle of Meralshford,—which he intends for the Lomond Hill, though he calls it Mons Grampius,—“ the natives “ conveyed their women and children into the “ towns,” as places of greater safety. Now, this plainly shews that there certainly had been towns ; neither are we to suppose that these had been so very few in number as that they would need to carry their families 12 or 20 miles, but rather that they were in the immediate neighbourhood. Now, it is quite plain to me that the towns, such as Kinross, Strathmiglo, Auchtermuchty, Abernethy, and Falkland, all existed at that period ; and it was no doubt to those towns that the natives carried their wives and children, to be out of the line of march of the Roman army. We will also see in the sequel that the Caledonians and northern Picts burnt, or sacrificed, an *ancient city*, rather than allow the Romans to take possession of, and fortify it, immediately before the next battle, or the battle of the Stormont ; just as the Russians sacrificed their ancient capital Moscow, rather than allow

Buonaparte to have shelter, or to winter in it. Thus, I am clearly of opinion that we have too easily surrendered the antiquity of our nation to various English authors, our antagonists, or those that have made a point of denuding us of that honour as a nation, merely from vague conjecture, or unfounded opinions of their own brain. Neither do I assent to the generally received, but not well supported opinion, that our ancestors were such rude and barbarous, and even naked savages, as Cæsar pretends that they were, when he first landed in Britain. If they were so, it is quite obvious that they had made very great proficiency in improvement and civilization, in little more than 100 years from the time he landed, to the time this battle was fought with Agricola ; when these pretended savages, or rude barbarians, were able to bring into the field such warlike armed chariots, (the very sight of which even daunted the Romans themselves, by their own confession), and from such quarters as the Romans had never previously penetrated, nor do I believe ever did afterwards. If the Caledonians possessed cities and towns, and the country apparently so well, at least so generally cultivated, and so much traversed at that early period, as appears by the roads, some of which, where the Romans built their forts, are even at this day very seldom trodden by the foot of man ; we can by no means suppose them to be, or to acquiesce in the opinion that they were, such barbarous naked savages as they are given out to

be. If ever they were so, it had been at a far more early period than that we allude to. It is not improbable that Caesar may have given them the epithet of *naked* savages, on account of the kilts they wore, which exposed their knees. But this is no proof of their barbarity ; for the epithet may still be applicable to our modern Highlanders, in so far as the kilt is concerned. It is, however, worth observing, that the ancient farm, contiguous to where the great battle of Meralsford commenced, called the Bonnety or Bannety, obviously takes its name from a beautiful round hill, just immediately above it, having very much the appearance, especially on the east side, of a bonnet that was till lately generally worn on the head, and is even yet used in the country amongst some elderly people ; and a very decent, becoming, and warm covering it is. Now, it is pretty clear that this farm had received its name, at a very early period, from this circumstance ; and it may be inferred from this, that these bonnets had been used in these early times, and faithfully retained their name, even to this late period, without the least alteration. So, it seems, our ancestors, long before the entrance of the Romans, had at least their heads covered, which is usually the last part of the body that would be covered by a savage, or those little removed from a state of nature. The kilt, which comes from the word Celt, and the plaid also, boast of as great antiquity as the Roman Toga.

There is also a round hill just above the town of

Dundee, called the Bonnet Hill, from its resemblance to this covering of the head ; which name it has retained from time immemorial. It is very remarkable that, on the farm of Bonnety, there is a field contiguous to where the battle commenced, and where the cairn stood, that still retains the name of the Romantie, and also a well called the Romantie well ; so that it is quite obvious that this name had been given to the field by the possessor or proprietor of the farm at that early period, from the circumstance of the Romans being in that place, or fighting that battle ; and, what is something still more astonishing than the name of a farm, is that it has been so faithfully kept up to this day. It also serves to prove that the usual name the natives had then given to the Romans had been that of the Romanties. This circumstance I only learned very lately, and it struck me considerably.

That their intercourse with the Romans would no doubt have a tendency to civilize or improve our ancestors, is readily admitted, but by no means to such a degree as is often conceded ; or that they had been previously in such a very rude state, as is generally supposed. We must make an allowance for that overweening conceit which the Romans had of themselves as a nation ; and we must also remember that they spoke contemptuously of all other nations who were not under their protection, or connected with them, calling them barbarians, in whatever state of improvement or cultivation they were. Our ancestors, even at that early period

of improvement, were certainly poorly accommodated indeed, if they were not able to compete with the Romans in constructing such humble dwellings, as the latter seem to have been satisfied with both at Orea and Lindum; and more particularly in the small forts that the soldiers would be stationed in, apparently affording but very poor and uncomfortable accommodation, and rendered still more so, by their being placed in general on the tops of hills or eminences; and also by the nature of these buildings, and the materials of which they were composed, being by no means impervious to the high blasts of wind and cold that would assail them from every quarter, in these exposed situations, especially in the winter seasons. These forts appear, in general, to have been only built of turf and stone, or even with stones entirely, without any lime or other cement, except dry moss; and even though lined with canvass or matting within, and also covered with the same kind of covering or painted cloth, could only afford at best very cold and uncomfortable habitations. This tends to set forth, in the most striking light, the madness of their ambition for conquest, when they were content to relinquish their beautiful and fertile shores, and their warm and genial climate, and submit to all these privations in our comparatively cold and inhospitable country, not to speak of the immense trouble and expence incurred in securing these conquests.

We now return, after this digression, to still further researches after these Roman forts. Passing



over from Cupar to the other side of the vale of Eden, that beautiful high peaked hill on the southwest, above Wemyss Hall House, near Scots Tarbet, on which there is the vestige of a fort, seems obviously to have been used by the Romans for keeping up the line of communication with the forts to the northward of Cupar; and those towards the south and east, such as that at Carskerdo, to the south of Ceres, as its name imports (Caer-skerdo). There has evidently been one, if not two, a good way east at Chesters, near Carnbee, as its name also imports; this being near, or in sight of the East Neuk of Fife, would be the last or eastmost in the whole chain of forts.

This Scots Tarbet has been a watch-tower from time immemorial, and is still standing. It is a large square tower in pretty good repair, with a small house on the top; and probably may have been a fortress in the time of the Romans, though evidently modernized, as the great road from Cupar to Edinburgh was wont to go betwixt and the forementioned hill above Wemyss Hall. The foundations of another fort are distinctly visible on the top of Scots Tarbet hill, amongst a clump of trees. A little down, and east from this, there were lately found thirty Roman urns placed in a circle, with one in the centre, having a broad flagstone covering it. But whether these contained the burnt bones and ashes of those that had fallen in a battle that had been fought in the neighbourhood, or of those that had resided in the fort, is difficult to de-

termine, but most probably the former. About three miles east, on the top of a pretty high eminence, nigh two miles east from Ceres, called Drumcarro Craig,—or rather Drumcarno, signifying the ridge of the Cairn,—there had been also a fort there, as its name imports; and the foundations of it are distinctly visible. In the vicinity of this, the Roman eagle was lately found, though a little mutilated, yet having the appearance as if it had been once fixed on the top of a spear. This intelligence I lately received from a gentleman of great respectability in the neighbourhood (Colonel Wemyss). Near this, a thin silver breast-plate, or an ornament for the breast, was likewise found; also some stone coffins and urns were discovered near to this, and in different places round about Ceres.

This village appears to be very ancient, and to have also derived its present name from the Romans, from the form in which it had been originally built, having much the appearance of a Cornucopiæ, on the right bank of a considerable stream, being narrow at the north end, but widening gradually toward the south, keeping the bend of the water, and when nigh the south end, approaching nearer the stream, and enlarging in breadth all at once like a cornucopiæ or horn of plenty; and from this circumstance, the name of Ceres, the goddess of corn or plenty, had been given it; which name it has faithfully retained without any alteration. A little to the westward of Scots Tarbet, on the side of the

Walton hill, and in the parish of Cults, a great battle was fought, supposed by some to have been a Roman battle; and it is pretty obvious that it was so, from the vestiges of a Roman camp still visible, and the great entrenchments cast up, which have never yet been nearly filled up. It is obvious, it must have been at a very early period, before the parish of Cults had received its name, which is evidently derived from this battle; as Cults, in the ancient Gaelic, signifies battle, and the kirk stands nearly a mile to the westward. It is said that it was from the circumstance of finding some of the large bones of those who had fallen in this battle, when enclosing a clump of planting, that first suggested the idea, to the old Earl of Crawford, of building his tomb there, “that he might see what sort of fellows these had been, in the morning of the resurrection.” But, ah! he will find matters of infinitely greater importance to engross his whole attention, in that awfully important and eventful morning, than to attend to such trivial affairs.

About a mile west of this, and south from Burnturk, a very conspicuous fort, standing on an eminence, is seen at a great distance. To the north west of this, and on the opposite side of the vale of Eden, there behoved to have been two forts at least, to guard that important pass at Ludofern or Lindifferan; and north from the old house of Ferney, where another great battle had been fought, I think between the Anglo Saxons and the king of the Picts. I have only to observe, further, as to Fife, that there

was one of the great Roman roads that run east across the south part of it, branching off from the great road from the south, past another town called Pitlochrie, which, I conjecture, must have some connexion with the Roman roads, as to its origin; as there are two towns of that name in the midst of the great scene of their operations in the vale of Eden. The vestiges of this road are still to be seen in different places, leading east in the direction of Lindum.

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#### CHAP. VIII.

*An Account of the site of several Roman Forts recently discovered in Fife and Strathearn, with their names, &c. to the westward of the line of the great North Road to the Capital.*

I SHALL now proceed to take a short view of the western chain or line of forts. It is pretty obvious that, towards the west of Stirling, the large mosses lying on the north banks of the Forth, and extending a far way west, had all been once overflowed with water, and, perhaps, even at this very time, as appears from anchors and small boats that are some-

times found beneath the deep bed of moss—which is eight feet deep in general—among the clay, after being cleared away, which is fast accomplishing by the spirited proprietor of Blair Drummond, and rapidly filling with families settling there from the north. This line, for a great way, would need very little guarding from the Romans,—nature doing this for them. However, there seems to have been a fort a considerable way up, near the head of the Forth, at Cardross, as its name imports (Caerdross,) or, I suppose, *Caer-ross*, the fort of the promontory. Another famous one, as is generally agreed, had been at Keir, to guard the pass by Stirling, deviating only a little from its original name *Caer*. There would, no doubt, be another one on the opposite side of the pass; especially as the town of *Alauna* was in the vicinity, and would need to be well protected. The Ochill hills rising very lofty towards the south, and there being but few passes through them, would require but very few forts. Only *Gleneagles* would need to be fortified, and another one east, near *Dunning*, leading south towards *Glen Devon*, which also would need to be fortified, on both the south and north passes. These heights, running east in a line with the camps at *Ardoch* and *Strageth*, on the north banks of the *Earn*, seemed all to have been fortified or guarded; one at *Innerpeffery*; one near the Bridge of *Kinkell*; another east at *Law Hill*, as its name seems to import, to guard a ford of the *Earn* a little to the south. About two miles farther eastward, there

seem to have been two to guard the passage at the Bridge of Dalreoch, one at the Woodhead of Keir or Caer (only a different way of pronouncing it). A little further east, and along the heights, there seem to have been severals at the three farms of the Cairneys, as their names would signify, particularly at the eastern farm of Cairney, to guard the pass to the bridge, or the ford then at Forteviot. This famous fort, whose site or foundation is yet distinctly visible, though a good part of it is run away by the water of May, stands a little south from the present bridge of that name; but I suppose there was only a ford and a boat for conveying over passengers at that period, no less than three public roads meeting at it; so that it would be a most important fort. About little more than a mile east from this, or half a mile east of Duplin, there behoved undoubtedly to have been two forts to guard that pass up from a ford, and the Boat of Forgan, leading up by the kirk of Aberdalgie. Little more than a mile further east, that eminence situated to the east, and up from the Kirkton of Mailor, which is now planted, points itself out as being the site of another one, both to guard a ford in the Earn south from this, and also the road or pass from the west by the old castle of Mailor to Perth. It would also have a view of the great road leading from the Bridge of Earn; but another fort would require to be still nearer, either about where Upper Hilton House now is, or upon those heights above Craigend, as well as another

on the east side of the great pass about the end of Moncrieff hill. Another one would require to be north at St Magdalens, in full view of Perth, to guard a pass through those high grounds. Two more would also be requisite near to where the Friartown toll now is, or rather the height at Upper Friartown,—one upon the heights to the west, and another down below the road nearer the Tay,—for the protection of the town of Victoria. Another one would need to have been a little east from the town, opposite the west end of the hill of Kin-noul, at Orchardnuick, or Grange, to guard the passage of the Tay,—for the defence or protection of Victoria on the east; these two last being the only ones touching the river Tay, none would need to be any farther east, as the Carse or Sidlaw hills, and the river Tay running past the south base of these, would be protection enough, especially as the Earn and the hills to the south were so well guarded. This last station seems evidently to have been the farthest north line of forts, and clearly shews that the Romans never had any establishment north of this line. A Roman fort has also been on the top of Moncrieff or Moredun hill, with ramparts, enclosing a considerable space of ground, and also a small lake, now a morass. Another one would unquestionably be requisite about the east end of the Hill of Moncrieff, somewhere about the rising ground south west from the Castle of Elcho, in order to keep up the line of communication with

the fort at Carpow, and those on the hills to the south and east.

In crossing over, however, we meet with two towns of the name of Cairney, Upper and Lower, now on the left bank of the Tay, and in the Carse of Gowrie ; but at that early period they had obviously been on the very narrowest place of the neck or isthmus ; and forts had been erected at them, as their names evidently import, for guarding the entrance into the peninsula. This is again another strong proof that the Tay has changed its original channel. Two large upright stones, standing a little to the north of these, on the then very neck of the isthmus, not above two miles in breadth, near the house of Pitfour, obviously point themselves out as of Roman antiquity ; and had been erected to point out that this had been the very northernmost place to which their boundaries extended ; the Tay then running a little to the north of this, behind the kirk of St Madoes, and those erected on the right bank, and then crossing over the narrow neck of the isthmus, not above two miles in breadth, and the line passing over the Earn to the fort at Carpow, plainly shewed that they had disclaimed any right to the peninsula, now the Carse of Gowrie. There are also two upright stones standing on the side of the road, about thirty miles beyond Ayr, betwixt Girvan and Ballantrae, about eight miles beyond the former, and four from the latter place. These stones obviously appear to have been erected by Agricola, as the *ne plus ultra* of



his conquests in that quarter, during his fifth campaign; and those at Pitfour, as the utmost extent of his conquests, or even of the Roman boundaries, to the north, as the fruit of his victory at Meralsford.

This fort to the east of the Hill of Moncrieff would complete the whole line of communication, or chain of forts, all the way from the Grampian Mountains, near the head of the Forth, and along through the north of Strathearn, and crossing it obliquely at the east end of Lower Strathearn,—then running along the hills on the north of Fife,—then crossing it in an oblique manner, and carried all the way to the east neuck of Fife, to the mouth of the Frith of Forth.

The bridge across the Earn, about five miles south from Perth, has the marks of great antiquity. It is a fine building, and seems to have been built about this period, or perhaps before; as the Picts were good architects,—witness the Round Tower at Abernethy, &c.—or perhaps it was built soon afterwards by the Romans. The most early date that can be found respecting it, is that it was repaired sometime in the eleventh century. Now, it is quite natural to suppose that it would have lasted a long time, after building, before it needed any repairs; and it is also quite obvious, upon the slightest inspection, that the river had run a considerable way farther south, and nearer the kirk and manse, a little to the westward, as the arches have been built to receive it, which had come directly by the foot of

the steep bank to the westward of it. But now its course is so far altered to the north, that an additional arch had to be added to the north end of the bridge in 1732; and now it enters in a very oblique manner. I am glad, however, to hear that it is still to be allowed to stand, even after the new one is finished to supply its place, which there is every appearance will soon be.

About two miles south east from Forteviot or Fortevioth, there would no doubt be another fort on the heights near Forgandenny, to guard the road to and from the passage-boat and ford. There would be another a little farther east on that conspicuous height called Dunbulg; which name seems to imply that there had been some building on that hill. This height divides Upper from Lower Strathearn, and commands a view of them both. There is also the foundation of a very conspicuous one yet standing on the top of the hill of Dron, a little south from the Church of Dron, having a full command of the road from Perth, all the way through Strathearn. There would also be another fort a little north, and down on the Quarrelheads of Dron, to guard a hill-road or pass to the southward, which brings us again to the great road or pass up the Weets of Baigly, of which I took notice before; and this connects the chain of forts on the south of Strathearn: Only I then omitted to observe that, besides the two large forts built at the south or head of that pass called Filday Law and Lusty Law, there appears to have been a lesser

one about the middle of that strait pass, called Little Filday, near the farm-steading of that name, and from whence it had obviously derived its name ; the other farm near the larger Law being called Meikle Filday, on account of the law, as well as the fort built on it,—both being of a far larger size. Near this farm of Little Filday, the rocking-stone of Dron is situated, a little west from the old road. There is only one pass farther west that requires to be noticed ; and that is the one up the water of May, south from Forteviot ; this would undoubtedly be guarded by two forts, either at, or a little above, the house of Invermay.

A little above the mouth of this pass, on the right bank of the May, and near the source of the Farg, or rather Argie, near the village of Ardargie, (signifying the height or eminence of the Argie), there is yet a beautiful Roman Camp in excellent preservation, though I have never yet got this visited, so as to be able to give any particular description of it, which I intend soon to do, if health permit. As to the large building amongst the hills south of this, formerly noticed, I am now rather inclined to think these very extensive ruins to have been a very strong and extensive Roman fortress, as it stands on the west side of the principal, if not the only road leading south from the pass, up the water of May, into the heart of the country of the Vennicones. This seems to have been upon a very extraordinary and extensive scale, and appears to have been the residence of some of the principal Romans. It is

highly probable, that their treasures for paying the troops, and other valuables, had been kept here, being more safe, by being in so inaccessible a place, and likewise well guarded on the north, both by the forts at the Cairneys, on the opposite banks of the Earn, and also by Fort-tavacht (as it was wont to be anciently spelled), on this side. This, then, may account for the tradition formerly mentioned. The camp below, at Ardargie, appears obviously to have been *Castra Stativa*, a standing camp, not only for supplying the garrisons with soldiers, &c. but also situate in the mouth of the gorge or pass leading up to this, for further protection or security to it. I am told that several miles of dry stone dykes or fences have been already built out of the ruins, and the stones are not near exhausted. It is also very remarkable that, as these ruins are still called by the name of Cairney Venn or Vane, it behoved to have had some connexion with, or to have been named from, the country to the south of it. There is also another farm town, near the south-east corner of Loch Leven, still called the Vain or Vane, with very little alteration, indeed, from its original name, Venn; and there is also a town with two upright stones yet standing near it, on the north-east corner of said loch, near the heart of the country, still called by the name of Connitie; formerly there were two houses, but now only one of that name, which had been styled the Connitie, or Contes, with very little alteration from the original. These names then speak

for themselves, and tend to set forth, in the most striking point of view, the antiquity even of our farm towns, besides the larger towns and villages, in spite of all opposition, or whatever may be said to the contrary.

These two upright stones are obviously of very great antiquity, and plainly indicate that there had been some very public and solemn transaction entered into,—very probably betwixt the Romans under Agricola's successor, and the King of the Picts, in their return north, and after the recal of Agricola,—intimating that they were solemnly to observe the various articles of agreement previously entered into at the peace, after the battle ; and of which peace, the two Dunipæces had been erected on the Baraway as a lasting memorial, as formerly noticed. So I am fully convinced that these stones had been erected by Sallustius Lucullus and the King of the Picts, and called the Contes,—contracted *pro Contestes*, joint witnesses, from the verb *contestor*, to invoke or call to witness,—namely, he would call the Gods to witness, in erecting them, that he would religiously observe every article of the treaty of peace or agreement formerly entered into with his predecessor. These stones, then, not only give name to the little farm beside them called the Conitie, which formerly consisted of two, called the Conities or Contes, but also to the whole province or shire called the county of the Vennicontes. Very fortunately, these two stones are still standing, (and I hope they will now be allowed to stand as long as

time lasts) on a pretty conspicuous situation, a little north from the road from Kinross, along the north side of the loch, and nearly opposite to the east end of it. I suppose Loch Leven also takes its original name from some part of this word, being called the Loch in the county of the Venn's; this obviously, again, from the old British word Fenns, signifying marshes or morasses, as there are a great many mosses and morasses in this county. Hence the Conitie Myre on the north east of the loch, now drained, is famous for bearing corn. The moss of Port Moak, on the east end of the loch, famous for peats; Brackly moss, on the south west side of it, the same, &c. beside a large space of ground below the out-let of the loch, and a little east from the farm of the Venn, of excellent ground, but so marshy, by the Leven often overflowing it, that it may literally be called the Fenn, and from which that farm obviously seems to have derived its name; but it could be easily drained, if the out-let of the loch were deepened a little.

A little more than a mile to the south west of the town of Kinross, there was lately a Roman urn dug up (but it was unfortunately broken in taking it out) upon the farm of Cassie-gour; but the fort seems to have been on that of Cowcairnie, as its name imports. This plainly points out that there had also been a Roman fort or station about that place, to guard two passes to the south, one directly south towards Dunfermline, through the Cliesh.

Hills; the other to the south east by the end of the hill behind Blair-Adam. A fragment of this urn I lately saw; and it appears to be of the very same materials with those in my possession. These, upon a more minute inspection, do not appear to be of clay, as is generally supposed, but rather of whin stone, or green stone, pounded or grinded down very small, with only a thin coating of some cement, the colour of clay, on the outside. The middle of these, when fractured, appears of a blue metallic lustre, not yielding to the knife; and I easily perceive some small nodules of felspar amongst it; besides, it is always of a hard gritty substance, none of which qualities are peculiar to clay. As the present road from Kinross to the Queensferry was only made some time last century, as formerly noticed, so this great thoroughfare would not need to be guarded; especially as, according to tradition, as well as by observation confirming it, the outlet of Loch Leven was at an early period to the west, as yet appears by the various hollow windings the water had taken among the moss; and the Gaelic names near the outlet, known to the best Gaelic scholars, all seem to confirm this, and that it had gone down by the west end of Binnartie Hill, running through Loch Ore, which is now also drained, and the water of Leven now issuing from the east end at the Gullet Bridge, across which the old road passed. It was certainly the most level, straightest, and nearest line of road; and must ultimately be yet resorted to, espe-

cially as the ferry is now established betwixt New-haven and Burntisland, and several miles of the road are already made north from Burntisland, and also a good many miles made up the Farg, and to the south of the old Castle of Balvaird, on the north end of this projected road, and directly in the same line of the old road, or rather considerably nearer. If, then, the proprietors of the grounds about Auchtertool, Auchterderran, and Lochgellie, and those coal countries, would shew any spirit in making part of the roads next to themselves, which would ultimately doubly repay them,—and also give some encouragement to the public to assist them in bringing the line of road that way,—it would be of great advantage ; as this is by far the worst place in all Fife for roads, as well as the least improved, as necessarily it must be,—good roads being among the first and best improvements in any country.



## CHAP. IX.

*The further March of the Romans to the North ;  
also an Account of their various Camps, and of  
the Battle of the Stormont or Buzzard Dykes.*

IT is now full time for me to attend to the march of the Romans a little further. They would pass close by the base of the hill, on which the aerial mansion of the Pictish king was built, from which there would be a full view of their army in marching past, and also all their way through Strathearn, till they were near Perth. They seem to have marched straight down towards the farm of Carey, standing near a curve of the Earn, then turning a little to the left, towards the water of Farg,\* where they seemed to have crossed it a little west of Culfargie House, near or about where the oil mill now stands

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\* Or rather the Argie, the noisy contentious stream, as its name imports, as appears from all the names of places connected with it ; Ard-Argie, the height or highest eminence of the Argie, a village near which the Argie takes its rise among the hills : Aber-Argie, the mouth or outlet, from its confinement, a village, where the Argie opens into the plain : Culfargie, or rather Culargie, the foot or bottom of the Argie, an ancient house, near which it empties itself into the Earn ; all which abundantly shew it to have been named originally the Argie.

for crushing lintseed. A few hundred yards to the westward of this, we still have remaining one of the roads that they had made at this very time ; though it cannot properly be called a paved one, as most of their old roads are, because there were no stones to be got any way near at hand to lay it with, being all through a wet clay soil. They had raised it above the surface considerably, about fourteen or sixteen feet broad, and carried it about two miles in a straight line west, through what is called Muir-month, till it came near to the village of Kintulloch ; and it is still remaining, for the most part, as they left it. There it comes in contact with the road from Perth to the south, which, no doubt, would be the line of road at that time also. There they seem to have turned to the right, at right angles,—to have crossed the Earn where the present bridge stands, which might even be a bridge at that time,—marching directly upon Bertha, as it is probable that it then had existence as a town, though a little above the present one. It is still handed down by tradition, that, when they came to the higher grounds, nearly two miles to the south, where they first got a sight of the majestic Tay, and the two beautiful green plains on its right banks, called the North and South Inches, the soldiers were in raptures, and cried out as in an extacy, *Ecce Tiberin!* (behold the Tyber); *Ecce Campus Martius!* (behold the plain of Mars ; a beautiful plain on the banks of the Tiber for various exercises, and for the election of magistrates); al-

though our Tay is nearly three times as large as their Tiber. Whether they staid any time in or about Bertha, as it was at first called, cannot now well be known, as they have left no lasting vestiges, that ever I heard of, thereabouts, except the town of Victoria in its vicinity.

To the westward, however, in a direct line towards their famed camps at Ardoch, we have another of their roads or paved ways. It begins betwixt three and four miles west, and runs nearly in a straight line for nearly the same distance through the wooded parks of Gask. This road is made with more pains, because it was intended to be oftener used, and was all laid with pretty large broadish whin-stones,—there being no free-stone that I could observe,—and well sunk in the ground, which is, for the most part, wet and marshy, and yet the road is considerably elevated above its surface. This was carried in a straight line towards and within a little of the ancient small priory of Incheffry or Inverpeffry, on the left bank of the Earn, whose abbot had the honour to attend on King Robert Bruce, and assist him in his devotions, on the night before the battle of Bannockburn. A little west of this, the Romans had crossed the Earn, and formed a camp on the right bank of the Earn, a little north of Strageth, and not far from Muthill. This they had not considered as the most commanding situation, and had gone a few miles to the south-west, and there formed a

set of most complete or double camps at Ardoch, on the left bank of the Water of Allan. Here they seem to have taken up their residence for a considerable time, as being the most commanding situation, and most convenient for receiving supplies. It would have a complete command of the grand pass of the Forth by Stirling towards the north, and likewise of that down through Upper Strathearn. From this they had made frequent excursions towards the north, as they have another camp at Dalgain Ross, a little west from Comrie, and even one as far north as the kirk of Fortingall, on the left bank of the river Lyon, a little north of Loch Tay, with a view of heading the Tay, and getting down its left bank, to bring Galgacus to an engagement.

They would have sufficient time for all these excursions, as it was more than three years after this before they could bring the brave king of the Caledonians to a decisive engagement. This was not done till long after the brave and prudent general Agricola was recalled by the cruel and treacherous tyrant Domitian, not so much for the honour of his victories, as was pretended, but from a principle of jealousy, and in order to effect his destruction and death. So long as the Romans kept on the west side of the Tay—that mighty barrier—the king of the Caledonians, the brave Corbred, seemed to be indifferent about coming to a general engagement with them a second time. Though, no doubt, he would be still gradually preparing for the last and

great struggle with them, yet it was not till they passed the Tay that he seems to have stirred himself to purpose. They appear to have effected their passage across it at, or a little above, where the ancient town of Perth stood, then called Bertha, at the confluence of the Almond and the Tay, about two miles above where it now stands. The name of the two little houses yet standing there is Bartha, which name is not far from the original one. Several antiquities that the Almond is said to have disclosed by undermining them, and making them either to appear or fall down, abundantly countenance, if not fully confirm this.

The cause of the town changing its position is said to be a great inundation of the Tay, wherein the greater part of the original town was either swept away, or suffered material damage; multitudes of the inhabitants also perished in the general calamity, which is even said to have extended to the king's palace, wherein his own son, an infant, with the nurse and fourteen others belonging to his household, are all said to have been swept away, the rest escaping with difficulty. This is said to have happened in the reign of William, surnamed the Lion, in the latter end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century, who also founded the New Town of Perth, in the situation that it now occupies, being more beautiful and convenient than its former one; the name of Perth being given it from one Perth, a nobleman, who is said to have granted the ground on which it was

built. But there obviously appears to have been a town existing previous to this on the spot where the present one now stands ; as is evident from the old cathedral still standing, and built long before this period, dedicated to St John, from which the town was styled St John's Town. Though I have not seen the Reverend Mr Scot's statistical account of Perth, yet I suppose it to have been built about the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century, perhaps coeval with the one at Abernethy.

The Romans, after crossing the Tay, seem to have established another camp on its left bank, at a place now called Grassy Wells. The Tay, a little above this, takes a more southern direction, after it has run for a good many miles due west and south-west from the great bend that it takes at the old castle of Kinclaven ; where, after marching along its southern bank, they had crossed the river Isla, at its confluence with the Tay, opposite to the above mentioned castle ; and there another camp had been formed in the corner below the house of Meikle-our. This would no doubt be the signal for the Caledonians preparing for battle, as the Romans were now within less than eight miles of their capital, and had no other river now to cross, nor any other impediment in their way. The first preliminary step they seem to have taken was to burn the large town at that time called the City of Cullen, standing about two miles distant on a curve of the Tay, at a place now called Inch-

truthil or Inchtuthil, where some ruins are still to be seen betwixt the house of Delvin and the boat of Caputh, to keep the Romans from taking possession of it. In an old map of Scotland, which is in my possession, there is a town marked on it, said to have been “ the ancient city of Cullen, and  
 “ burnt by the Picts to keep the Romans from fortifying it ;” but it could not have been the southern Picts, or those south of the Tay, as they had by this time made peace with the Romans. It must have been the northern Picts or Caledonians, as Cullen was a sort of key to their capital ; and, if once the Romans had got possession of, and fortified it, they would not have been so easily dispossessed. This the brave and prudent Corbred would easily perceive, and that he could not, without making this sacrifice, prevent it from falling into their hands, unless he hazarded a battle in the angle where the Romans were encamped, after their passage across the Isla. They, however, had drawn a strong line of circumvallation around, and at a considerable distance from their camp, as is yet to be seen, particularly to the east and north east. The ground chosen by the Caledonian King, as the field of battle, and where he awaited the approach of the Roman army, is about five and a half miles to the north or rising grounds, a little to the north-west of the Kirk of Kinloch, called the Buzzard Dykes and Cleaven Dykes ; their flanks being defended by the ramparts of earth of these names, having a gentle slope to the south, with the loch or lake of

Marlee on the south-east, and the smaller loch of Cluny on the south-west, in which there are the ruins of an old castle, where that prodigy of nature, called the Admirable Crichton, is said to have been born.

The march of the Romans to the field of battle would be straight up through the small village of Meikle-our ;—and, as they usually marched in a straight line, if the ground would any way admit of it, I observed a long stone standing before the village of Meikle-our, which I suppose was the very stone that they had placed there, to regulate their march to the battle, passing the village of Pittendriech, and then turning a little to the left. Their only access to the field of battle would be through the pass betwixt the two lochs above-mentioned. I never was on the field of battle, being only pointed out to me at a little distance ; but, by every circumstance about it, it plainly appears that the Romans met with a defeat here ; and that this was the very battle wherein Buchanan says the Caledonians beat the Romans, and by which they were expelled out of their country for a time, though he does not indeed mention the place. That the battle was fought here, is still farther evident, by the deep entrenchments cut by the Caledonians, called the Cleaven Dykes, and by small cairns or *tumuli*, in which those who fell in the battle have been buried. On account of the erroneous description given by Buchanan, misled by Tacitus, it has been generally supposed that this was the scene of the



grand battle said by him to have been fought betwixt the Romans and Caledonians, in the spring after their march from their camp at East Blair, near Lochore, which is only applicable to the battle of Meralsford, on the Eden. He is evidently right as to the time the first battle was fought, in saying that it was in the spring, and also as to other circumstances connected with the battle,—such as that the Romans were victorious after all the bravest of the Caledonians were slain, &c.—but he is wrong as to the place where the battle was fought. Had the Romans been victorious in the battle of Buzzard-dykes, there would have been a large cairn erected where the battle commenced, and likewise where it terminated, as in the case at Meralsford; also all their various movements during the battle would have been pointed out by smaller cairns, as well as the burnt ashes of the dead, which would have been found long ere this time. None of these, however, has been discovered as yet, that ever I heard of, which plainly indicates that they had met with a signal defeat. Notwithstanding of their superior discipline and armour, the Caledonians seem to have been always a match for them in the open field, where they had no opportunity of betaking themselves to military stratagem. Here they seem to have given a complete proof of this, where the Romans had not an opportunity of having recourse to military stratagem, and when like to be worsted, as was the case at Meralsford, where it is quite evident the Caledonians would have been victorious.

had they not been decoyed across the ford ; and even though they there fought under great disadvantages, the victory is said to have been for a long time doubtful.

The Romans, in their flight after the battle, seem to have gone towards the north-east ; as is evident from the many small *tumuli* or cairns, where those that fell in the flight, or pursuit, appear to have been buried ; and, indeed, this was the only open and safe quarter to fly to, every other being inclosed with the rivers Tay, Isla, and Ericht. I am the more confirmed in the opinion that the Romans were worsted in this battle, from the account I got, when in that country, of the skeleton of a Roman soldier being found standing in an erect posture in a moss, a little to the south of the line of flight ; this was said to have been about fifty years ago, when the people were digging for peats. He appeared to be in full armour ; but when touched or exposed to the air, he crumbled down into dust. Now, this circumstance plainly points out that, being hotly pursued by some of the victorious Caledonians, he had fled to the moss for refuge, and had there sunk down, only exchanging one kind of death for another. Another corroborative circumstance, which I shall here mention, was observed by myself when returning from seeing the falls of the Dee, and the grand and romantic scenery of Braemar. A good many years ago, when coming down on the rising grounds above the water of Calley, about five or six miles, I think, from this

field, and in the direct line of their flight from it, I observed a most beautiful figure cut pretty deep in the earth; and it struck me immediately that it was a Roman work of antiquity. Being cut somewhat deep in the ground where the swaird was green and tough, with the most exact symmetry, it made a most conspicuous and beautiful appearance, being done upon a large scale, though the road destroyed it considerably by passing through the centre of it. I stopt and contemplated it with admiration for some time; and yet forgot to take the least drawing of it; but I think it was either in the form of a hexagon or octagon. I am quite convinced that this had been made by the Romans at the time we are speaking of; and that, after the pursuit had been given up by the Caledonians, this had been their *ne plus ultra* towards the north, where they had stopt and cut the figure of the temple of their god Terminus. They now seem to have turned more to the east, and to have crossed the water of Ericht, immediately contiguous to where it is joined by the water of Calley, when its banks assume a very steep and beautifully romantic aspect,—to have kept still east in the hollow behind the first range of hills (where I have heard of Roman antiquities being found) before the house of Sir William Ramsay of Banff, and to have crossed the river Isla, a good way below the Kirk of Glenisla,—to have kept still among the hills till they came out at the pass where the river South Esk has forced a passage, crossing it somewhere

about Cortachy,—and then to have gone down its left bank towards the south-east, where I understand there are the remains of another camp. It would not, however, be a camp of ordinary strength that could keep the minds of the soldiers free from a state of alarm for their safety, at this time, or effectually secure them from the attacks of the victorious Caledonians. It, therefore, strikes me most forcibly, that that extraordinary strong work, a little farther down, betwixt and the town of Brechin, called Cater-thun, had been raised by the Romans at this time for greater security, until they were taken off the coast by means of their shipping, which could only be at Montrose, as the nearest sea-port, at the mouth of the South Esk, when they are said to have gone to the south, and were “forced, with doubtful success, to contend with the Britons for their ancient province.” The uncouth name of the work now mentioned, standing betwixt the North and South Esk rivers, could not be the one given it by the Romans; for the natives could have no communication with them while they were making it; and, after they left it, it is not likely they would know its Roman name; so that its present name appears to have been given to it by themselves, either at that time or afterwards.

Though there is also a camp not far from this; near the Kirk of Inverarity, of a large size, and in good preservation, yet that might be one made by Severus, who is said by Buchanan to have

made an expedition through the whole of the island, towards the north, with a very numerous army; and, though he was sick during the whole of that expedition, so as to be obliged to be carried in a covered horse litter, yet he never desisted till he reached the utmost extremity of the island. This expedition took place in the reign of Donald I. above one hundred years after their first expulsion from the country; and, though the Caledonians durst not hazard a battle with such an immense army in the open field, yet they closely watched their motions, and hung on their rear, so as to take advantage of every opportunity that offered for cutting them off. They are even said to have also left herds of their cattle to wander at large, to entice the Romans to stray from their camp, by which stratagem multitudes of them were cut off by the enemy. By the great losses they sustained in this manner, as well as by the excessive fatigue arising from cutting down woods, levelling hills, filling up marshes, and making roads through them for the army to pass; also the constructing bridges over rivers, and the great inconvenience they experienced by the coldness of the country, the wetness of the season, and the fatiguing long marches,—great multitudes of them are said to have been so weakened as not to be able to follow the army, and were obliged to be killed by their own comrades, to prevent them from falling alive into the hands of their enemies. They are said to have lost, by these different causes,

no less than fifty thousand of their troops. It plainly appears that Severus had set out with an immense army, as is evident from that large camp, unquestionably formed by him, containing no less than eleven acres of ground, on the site of which nearly half the town of Cupar in Angus is built.

The route to the north which nature points out, and which, no doubt, he would follow, is by keeping to the north-east towards Stonehaven, and along the line of the great north road to Aberdeen; and there is another camp, said to be about the Water of Cowie, on that road, which seems to confirm this. Happening to meet with a number of gentlemen, both from the town and county of Aberdeen, last season at Pitcaithly Wells, they told me that there were several camps, and different vestiges of Roman antiquities, both through that country, and also all the way to the north of Scotland, or as far as the Moray Frith at least, as there is one of their camps near Burgh-head, and a famed well recently discovered in the corner of it. There is one, I observe, marked as a Roman camp in Taylor and Skinner's Roads, near the Kirk of Cairney, about five miles south from the town of Keith. I understand there is also another near Gordon Castle, about the Kirk of Bellie, all corroborative of Severus's expedition at this time. It appears to have been productive of no lasting effects, but only a short temporary peace, as the natives never submitted to him as a conqueror.

## CHAP. X.

*Anecdotes of King James V. the "Gudeman of Ballengeigh," when about Falkland and its vicinity.*

HAVING now accompanied, or rather endeavoured to follow, my friends the Romans in their line of march through Fife, Perth, and Angus-shires, till they embarked for their departure, I shall again return to the banks of Eden ; and, as I only take notice of the *antiquities* connected with the place, I shall endeavour to give a few local anecdotes of what happened at a much later date, and which are of a very different nature from what we have already attempted to investigate.

King James V. otherwise known by the name of the Gudeman of Ballengeigh—which name is said to be derived from a strait hollow foot-path leading up to the Castle of Stirling from the north-west, called Ballengeigh—is universally allowed to have had an extravagant and eccentric vein of humour, to gratify which he stuck at nothing ; and, as he could best do it by throwing off all restraint as a king, and appearing *incog.* he often indulged himself in this. Accordingly, many strange and ludicrous adventures of his are handed down by

tradition. In some of these he was but roughly handled, and in no small degree of danger, before he discovered himself. A few of these that are said to have taken place in the neighbourhood, when he resided at Falkland, and which seem best authenticated, shall be mentioned at present.—In one of these disguised excursions, in which he often delighted, he is said to have gone into the miller's house in a place called Ballomill, on the north bank of the Eden, a little above Lady Mary Lindsay Crawford's house, one evening in the twilight. He asked quarters as a travelling man; the wife only being in the house at the time, says to him, in a very frank sort of a way, "Sit down, " for though the miller be not in, I've no doubt " but he'll give you quarters whenever he sees " you, for you are a decent looking like carle." Accordingly, in a little while the miller comes in, and upon the wife representing the matter to him, he immediately gave his consent also that he should get quarters. It appears that the evening passed away very agreeably, and that the miller was much pleased with the conversation of his lodger; for, when they came to speak about making ready supper, the miller desired his wife to bring " the hen that sat next the cock," and make her ready for supper, though there is no appearance that he knew him to be the king, but only that he perceived him to be rather above the ordinary sort of travellers. When they came to sit down to supper, the miller was for the stranger taking the



head of the table. This the King affected to be shy about doing, as being a stranger, which made the miller add, " Sit up, for I will have strangers " honoured." The King was accordingly obliged to comply with the request. He had usually a time and place appointed for his nobles meeting him after these little relaxations from court etiquette. Accordingly, he got the miller next morning to convey him as far as the place where his courtiers were appointed to meet him. When the miller saw this, he was not a little astonished and embarrassed at being in the presence of his Majesty, whom he had entertained as his guest; but, as the King had partaken of his hospitality, he would have the miller to accompany him to Falkland to his palace, and also partake of his hospitality in return. This the miller was obliged to comply with; and, when about to sit down to dinner, the King was also for the miller taking the head of his table, which he declined, and certainly with greater propriety than the King needed to have done in presiding at the miller's table. This made his Majesty pay him back in his own words, only adding a slap on the side of his head: " Sit " up," says he, " for I will have strangers honour- " ed." It is reported that the miller staid eight or ten days about the palace; and, being a strong athletic man, he beat all the courtiers at the putting of the stone, or tossing the bar, or any of these athletic exercises; but it was observed with surprise that, notwithstanding the fine feeding at the

King's table, above what he was accustomed to, he gradually fell off; and the longer he staid, he turned still the weaker, which made his Majesty ask him what he usually fed on. He replied that it was "on broken water and slain meal." By broken water, he must have meant that which fell upon the mill wheel, or from other parts of the water-fall, by which it was broken; but whether by thus being broken or divided, it imparted more strength to the miller, seems problematical. When he was about to leave the palace, and return home again, the King asked at him whether he would choose the aught part, or the twa part, of the lands of Ballemill. The miller, it seems, had not been a very good accountant; and, as the aught part seemed to sound best, and count highest, he chose it. Accordingly, he got his choice, the eighth part instead of the half; and the land was made over to him in a Crown charter, with liberty to hunt all the way to the gate of Melville House, about three miles to the north-west; and he and his heirs enjoyed these till within about 85 years ago, when they were sold to a man of the name of Honeyman, whose children reside about Auchtermuchty, and now possess them; but it is universally allowed that the miller and his heirs had acquired them from the King for giving him a night's lodging.

The following anecdote I had from an old respectable and well informed clergyman:—Being one day on one of those disguised excursions, the

King met with a shepherd mending his shoes at the side of Rossie loch, about one and a half mile north from Falkland, and on the north bank of the Eden. He entered into a conversation with the shepherd ; and, among other things, asked him “ Wha staid in that muckle hous there ?” pointing to the palace. The shepherd says, “ It is some man they ca’ the King ; but we just ca’ him Ja-mie the Gudeman.” “ Aye,” says the King, “ what sort of man is he, that gude man ?” “ I dinna ken muckle about him,” says the shepherd, “ but they say he maks a great deal o’ dirty knights.” “ Aye, does he mak a deal of dirty knights ?” “ So they say.” Meantime the sheep went astray, and the shepherd was obliged to go and turn them, leaving his shoe and awl behind him ; but, in his absence, the King takes up the awl, and puts it into his pocket. When the shepherd returned, he found his shoe, but the awl could not be found. He looks about, and searches still for it, saying, “ I wonder what can be cum of my elsine ; I’m shure I left it here ?” “ That’s as muckle as sayin’, sir, that I steal’t it.” “ I’m no sayin’ you steal’t it ; but I’m shure I left it here ; and if a’ body had lettin’t a be, it wud hae been here still.” “ That’s still sayin’ as muckle as I had steal’t it.” “ I’m no sayin’ you steal’t it ; but I’m shure I left it here ; and it wudna ga’en awa’ its lane.” “ That’s still sayin’ the same sir, as I had steal’t it.” In the meantime, the nobles made their appearance ; and,

when the poor shepherd saw them surround the King, and pay such attention to him, he was all out, when he perceived that it was the *Gudeman himself* that he had been using such freedom with, and half impeaching with stealing his awl. But, in order to make atonement, the King makes him strip himself naked, and wade into the loch, till he was up to the neck in mire and moss, with which it abounded before it was drained; and, when he comes out—and surely a very grotesque figure he would make—he dubs him, adding, “Mony a dirty knight I’ve made; but such a dirty knight as you I never made,” and gave him the lands of Lathrisk to live on. Now the very farm that he was herding on, belonged to that estate, as it is only the farm of Bowhouse that adjoins the loch, on the south side, and has a good portion of the moss drained from the old loch added to its lands. It still belongs to the estate of Lathrisk, though it has passed through many hands since.

I shall just give a single instance of one of these dirty knights, to whom the shepherd perhaps might have an allusion, before he himself was added to their number, literally the most dirty one of the whole. This was a tinker that the king happened to meet with accidentally at an ale-house, in one of his *incog.* adventures, whom he also dubbed. There was a song made upon the singular adventure, evidently of a considerably more modern date than the circumstance that gave birth to it; but when, or by whom it was composed, I cannot say; I only

happened to hear it sung, near thirty years ago, and I put it down in writing, being struck, not so much with its air, though it is pretty agreeable too, as with the humour of it, particularly the reply given by the king to the tinker, and the great perplexity and embarrassment the poor tinker was in, when he found that it was the king he was sitting behind.

The song is here inserted *verbatim*.

And now to be brief, let us pass o'er the rest,  
Which seldom or never was given for a jest ;  
And come to king James the fifth on the throne ;  
A pleasanter man, sure there never was none.

As he was a hunting his fair fallow deer,  
And of all his nobles he freely gat clear,  
In search of new pleasures away he did ride,  
'Till he came to an ale-house, just by a road side.

And there with a tinker he happened to meet ;  
And in this kind manner did lovingly greet :  
What's that honest fellow you've got in your jug,  
Which under your arm you so lovingly hug ?

In troth, said the tinker, its nappy brown ale,  
And for to drink to you, deed I winna fail ;  
For tho' that thy jacket sir's more glorious and fine,  
I hope that my two-pence is as good as thine.

By my saul, said the King, let the truth it be spoke,  
And straight with the tinker sat down for to joke.  
He called for a pitcher, the tinker another,  
And at it they went on like brother and brother.

And as they were a-drinking, the king he did say,  
 What news dost thou hear, honest tinker, I pray ?  
 There's nothing of news, sir, of which I do hear,  
 But the king goes a hunting his fair fallow deer.

And truly I wish I so happy might be,  
 That while he's a hunting the king I might see ;  
 For tho' that I've travell'd the land many a ways,  
 I never yet saw the King in all my whole days.

The king in a hearty brisk laughter replied,  
 I'll tell thee honest fellow if that thou canst ride,  
 I'll take thee on behind me, and thee I will bring  
 Into the royal presence of James our king.

Perhaps, said the tinker, his Lords will be drest  
 So fine, that I cannot know the king by the rest.  
 Indeed that is true, sir ; but when we come near,  
 The king will be cover'd ; his nobles all bare.

Its up got the tinker, and hoisted the black  
 Budget of leather, and tools on his back.  
 It's when they came near the merry green wood,  
 His nobles came round them, and bare headed stood.

The tinker then seeing so many a gallant peer,  
 Immediately whispered the King in the ear :  
 Now, seeing they're all clothed so gallant and gay,  
 Then which is the King, now come tell me I pray ?

The king to the tinker did make this reply,—  
 Be m' saul, man, it must be either you, or I ;  
 For they're all bare-headed, and stand all around.  
 With that, with his budget, he's fallen to the ground,

Like one that's distracted and out of his wits ;  
And upon his knees he immediately gets,  
Beseeching his mercy :—The king to him said,  
Thou art a good fellow, so be not afraid.

Now, what is thy name ? It is John of the Vale,  
A mender of kettles, a lover of ale.  
Arise up, Sir John, and I'll honour you here ;  
I'll make thee a knight of three hundred a-year.

Now, that was a good thing for the tinker indeed :  
And straight to the Court he was sent then with speed,  
Where store of great pleasures and dancing were seen,  
Into the royal presence of our king and queen.

But surely this would be the last tinker that ever he would dub. If we may judge from what happened, one might imagine he would be heart sick of them, being taken prisoner by three of them, and compelled to stay with them several days, so that his nobles lost all trace of him ; and being also forced not only to lead their ass, but likewise to assist it in carrying part of its panniers ! At length he got an opportunity, when they were in a house bousing at the east end of the village of Milnathort, where there is now a new meeting-house built, when he was left on the green with the ass. He contrived to write some way on a slip of paper, and gave a boy half a crown to run with it to Falkland, and give it to his nobles, intimating that the Gudeman of Ballengeigh was in a state of captivity. After they got it, and knew where he

was, they were not long of being with him, although it was fully 10 miles they had to ride. Whenever he got assistance, he caused two of the tinkers that were most harsh and severe to him to be hanged immediately, and let the third one that was most favourable to him go free. They were hanged a little south-west of the village, at a place, which, from the circumstance, is called the Gallow Hill to this day. The two skeletons were also lately found, after the division of the commonity that recently took place. He also after this time made a law, that whenever three men tinkers or gipseys were found going together, two of them should be hanged, and the third set at liberty.

Being one day up on the Lomond Hill, he met a chapman or pedlar, and bought his whole pack from him; but left it in a hollow till he got time to convey it away, or perhaps rather with a view to try the pedlar's honesty. But it appears he was not able to resist the temptation; for, immediately after the King was out of sight, the pedlar returned and took away his pack again, not thinking that the King would find him out; but this he soon did, and hanged him for his pains. It was by such methods as these that he attempted to reform the morals of his subjects, or correct abuses prevailing in his kingdom; but these were too widely spread, and too deeply rooted, for him to be able to eradicate, all the time he lived amongst them. The pedlar was hanged on the side of the public road, about half a mile west from



the palace, at a place still known by the name of the Gallows by the old people. A little to the westward of this, also, a famous heroine of the name of Jenny Nettles, and upon whom the famed song was made up, being a prototype of Meg Merrilies, in a fit of remorse hanged herself on a low crooked tree on the road side, which ever after retained the name of Jenny Nettles' Gallows, and only gone a few years ago. She lies buried at the foot of the hill, at a place called Jenny Nettles' Grave.

Whenever James heard of abuses prevailing in any part of his kingdom, he usually made a journey personally to take cognizance of them himself, in order to rectify them ; such as to the Laird, or the De'il of Drummelzier, as he was called, whom he caused to be hanged ; and also in a journey north to Aberdeenshire, where he also caused two culprits be hanged ; but he was so roughly handled by them, when he first made trial of them, in order to convict them, that he was obliged to throw open his jacket to let them see who he was, and also to sound his horn for assistance to seize them.

There is a story told of him, that took place five miles east from Falkland, at an old castle, the remains of which are still to be seen, called the Castle of Clatto, standing in a narrow pass among the higher grounds to the south-east, and by which the public road betwixt Cupar and Kinghorn then passed. There was a man of the name of Seaton, who

had four or five stout young sons. Many robberies and also murders had been committed thereabouts, and persons were amissing, and were never more heard off; and it could never be found out by whom these were committed, till the King one day had been passing by *incog.* evidently with a design to find out the perpetrators of such villany, when he was attacked by one of Seaton's sons, who seized his horse by the bridle, and ordered him to surrender his purse or his life. The King replied, that he had not very good will to do any of them. Meantime, he takes out a small sharp sword, and dexterously cuts off the robber's hand which hung in the bridle, which he took and put into his pocket, and went home for that day. Next day, however, he returned, not in any disguise, but as the King, taking the hand with him, in order to call upon old Seaton, who was known to him personally. Seaton was very happy, no doubt, to see his Majesty calling upon him so familiarly. The King enquiring in an affable manner for all the family, and particularly for the one who attacked him, whom it seems he knew by name, the old man told him that he was rather ailing, and in bed.

The King wished to see him. This they could not well deny him. When he came to his bedside, his Majesty offered to shake hands with him. Young Seaton put out his left hand; the King asked why he offered that hand, as that was not the ordinary one to shake hands with. He was obliged to confess that he had met with an ac-

cident, by which he had lost the other one. Says the King, "I happen to have a hand in my pocket, and if it suit you, you are welcome to it;" and, no doubt, upon trial it would suit exactly. The mask was instantly then thrown off; and immediate orders given for seizing old Seaton and his sons, who were all hanged. I understand this anecdote is mentioned in the Statistical Account either of the parish of Kettle or Cults, I suppose not materially different from the account just now given. Clatto, as to its situation, appears rather to be most contiguous to the Cults parish. There are none of the other anecdotes now mentioned that ever were in print before, so far as I know.

There is only another one that I shall take notice of at this time, as it may be thought by some that I have waded far enough into these sort of antiquities. In another of his roaming excursions in which he seemed to delight—for he could not endure to be long in the trammels of the stiff formality of court—he fell in with the priest or minister of Markinch, a parish contiguous to that of Falkland, on the south-east. He seemed not to entertain the most favourable opinion of the priest's abilities, and perceived him not to possess a very clear head-piece; and, as he seemed to be rather a dull scholar, he left two or three questions for his consideration, till next meeting, which was then appointed, time and place; at same time intimating to him, that, if he did not answer them satisfactorily to his mind, he was to be put out of his

office, and lose his benefice. The questions were : Ques. 1st, Where is the middle of the earth ? Ques. 2d, How long will I take in going round the world ? Ques. 3d, How much am I worth ? And, Ques. 4th, What is my (the King's) thought ? all hard enough questions seemingly for the poor priest, who did not know how to answer one of them. A little to the south of Markinch, there is a mill on the water of Leven, a little below the Plasterer's Inn, called the Middle Mill, whose miller is said to have been a witty, ingenious, sort of a man, and was also said to be very like the minister of Markinch in person. He, hearing of his great perplexity about answering his questions, went to him, and said, that if he would give him a suit of his best cloaths, he would endeavour to meet the King, and try to answer his questions for him. This was a great relief for the poor priest, who chearfully agreed to the proposal ; at same time it was agreed betwixt them, that, if the miller answered the questions to the satisfaction of his Majesty, he should also intercede for the priest, or minister, being continued in his living. Accordingly, when the time appointed arrived, the miller was sure to be on the spot waiting for his Majesty, to try and answer the foresaid questions in their order. Ques. 1st, " Where is the middle of the " earth ? " The miller put out his staff before him, and said, " It is just there ; " adding, " If " your Majesty will measure all around, you will " find it to be just where the point of my stick is."

The King thought he would rather take his word for it than be at the trouble of measuring all around. However, he thought the answer pretty ingenious, and it accordingly passed.—Ques. 2d, “How long will I take in going round the world?” Ans. “If you will rise with the Sun, and go round with him all the day, you will exactly take twenty-four hours.” He was as well pleased with that answer, and thought it equally ingenious. Ques. 3d, “How much am I worth?” Ans. “I think you should just be worth about 29 pieces of silver. Our Saviour was only valued at 30; and I think you should certainly be valued a penny less than he was valued at.” He was equally well pleased with this answer. “Now, since you have done so well, can you tell me what my thought is?” Ans. “You are thinking that I am the minister of Markinch, but I am only the miller of the Middle Mill!” “Well,” says the King, “You shall have his birth, and he shall be turned out.” “No, if it please your Majesty,” replied the miller, “We have made an agreement already as to that; and I was to intercede for him to your Majesty, that he should be continued in his birth.” I believe he was retained in it at the miller’s intercession.

King James V. gave the town and lands of Polmood on the banks of the Tweed to a gentleman, in a curious and very easy manner of holding, running thus in doggerel rhyme:—

I give you Powmood and Powmood town,  
 And a' the lands up and down,  
 For keeping my bow and arrow,  
 When I come to hunt in Yarrow.

Were this the only specimen of his poetical effusions that he has left behind him, we might be justified in not forming a very high idea of him as a poet; but he has left various specimens of his muse, shewing by these that he was by no means a despicable one, but rather the contrary, considering the age in which he lived. Witness the *Gaberlunzie Man*, a beautiful old song, that is universally ascribed to him. The *Jelly Beggar*, or *We'll go no more a roving*, is also said to be the production of his muse. There is also another beautiful *Gælic* song, called *Marion o' Gaberlang*, that I have heard ascribed to him, which has a beautiful *Gælic* air, and shews that he had been well acquainted with the *Gælic* or *Erse*, to have been able to compose such a song in it. However, I never recollect of hearing any more of it sung, but one verse and the chorus. The *Gudeman of Auchtermuchty* is also generally allowed to be the production of his pen, one of the best specimens of genuine humour any where to be found; and though there be various translations or editions of it, yet the original, with the primitive orthography, is only to be found in the *Advocates' Library*, to the air of *Tak' your auld cloak about you*.

There is a beautiful Danish camp close upon the right bank of the *Eden*, betwixt *Auchtermuchty*

and Falkland, yet in excellent preservation, and from which the village of Dunshelt, a little below, takes its name, originally being Danes-halt. A curious tradition respecting it prevails about Falkland, which I had from an old man there, a good many years ago ; and which I shall here insert as I then had it. When the Danes lay in that camp, and also in another one a little to the south-east still remaining, in the form of a half moon, their General having learnt that some woman about Falkland cohabited with the General of the Scots army, that lay then encamped over at the foot of the east Lomond hill, about a mile west from Falkland, and two from the Danish camp, he sent for her, and bribed her, promising a greater reward if she would assassinate or quickly cut off by poison, or some other expeditious way, the Scots General, the first opportunity, as Judith did Holofernes, though from very different motives. If she succeeded, it was agreed on, that she should go up on the black heathy hill, immediately above the Scots camp, in the morning, having a white sheet about her, from whence she could easily be perceived from the Danish camp. According to account, she but too well succeeded in her treasonable assassination ; and went up with the agreed on signal upon the dark hill, which still retains its original sombre appearance. This was soon perceived by the Danes, who, no doubt, would be on the look-out. They marched out immediately from their camp over to the Scots camp, and attacked them while in a state of confu-

sion, from the sudden death of their General, and before they had one appointed to succeed him, which required more time and formality in doing in those days than in our modern times. It is said that the slaughter among the Scots was great; and of this, there are yet some indications even in our day, by the number of pits in which the dead had been buried, appearing green, and forming a great contrast among the dark heath, till of late that the plough has found its way among them. The tradition adds, that the woman was held in utter abhorrence and neglect among her neighbours, and pined away in poverty and want, and died miserably. The camp then occupied by the Scots is still to be seen pretty entire in general, except that the plough has encroached on some parts of it, about three or four years ago; it affords as curious a specimen of encampments as are any where to be met with. A number of deep trenches run parallel to one another, but carried out transversely, or a considerable way beyond each other, in the most intricate manner, with a considerable space in the centre, where the army had been encamped, as the safest spot; so that an enemy had to cross all these, to the number of three or four, and fight his way over them, before he could reach the main camp. The line of circumvallation, or the one next to the Danes, had been very deep, appearing yet in some places seven or eight feet deep, and carried out a far way east towards Falkland, and west all the way through the large farm of Kilgour, for



more than a mile ; and notwithstanding the many crossings and recrossings of the plough over it, for so long a time, in some places it is not yet near filled up.

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I shall now conclude, by endeavouring to rectify a mistake that has been of long standing. Buchanan appears to be among the first that we read of that has led the way, and all that have written after him appear to have followed the same erroneous tract ; at least Sibbald, in the century before last ; and I am a little astonished to perceive Mr Forsyth, even in our time, taking the same beaten tract. All these authors assert that Fife is a promontory or peninsula ; and that Kinross, as its name imports, is the head of this promontory, and Culross the back or hinder part of this Ross or promontory. That Fife is either a peninsula or promontory, as to the eastern half of it, is not what is here disputed ; but that Kinross is the head of this Ross or promontory, as it refers to Fife, can by no means be admitted. Any person, upon the slightest observation, will easily perceive that Kinross is built upon the head of a considerable promontory, that juts out into Loch Leven for more than half a mile ; the loch coming up all that way to the end of the town, on the south side, and nigh to the north end of the town, on the east side : So that the house of Kinross stands on the middle of the Ross or promontory. The town of Kinross is built at the

head of it, as its name imports ; so that it is perfectly obvious, that it is that local promontory that its name is derived from, and not from the whole of Fife, as such. Though I am not so well acquainted with Culross, yet it must be also some local promontory near it that its name is derived from, by no means from Fife, as such. There is an old ruinous house, betwixt Ely and St Monance, that had stood on the top of a small Ross or promontory, called Ardross, which signifies the height or eminence of the promontory, because built upon the top or highest part of it. Now, according to the generally received opinion, this house should have been built upon the top of the west Lomond Hill, to answer to its name, as the height or the highest eminence of Fife, considered as a promontory.

Sibbald carries out his idea of Fife as a promontory still farther ; and says that the east point, or as it was called anciently, the *East Neuck* of Fife, was named formerly “ Muckross, from its supposed resemblance to the snout of a swine, and because it “ anciently abounded in wild boars.” Had he said that it was called Muckross, or the swines promontory, from *Muc*, a swine, because it anciently abounded in wild boars, a species of swine, and not solely confined himself to the snout of one, in my opinion he would have been more correct. The promontory, strictly styled Muckross, plainly points itself out as that which juts out a considerable way cast into the German Ocean, all the way

from the town of St Andrews, and drawing a line from that town down to Anstruther; hence called *Cursus Apri*, or Boars Chase, and given by Hungus King of the Picts to the Monks of Regulus, or St Rule. There is also a town a little south east of St Andrews, called Byre-hills, evidently a corruption of Boar-hills. Sibbald also mentions that they had been successful in killing some of a very large size, as he takes notice of the tusks of one of a most enormous size, that, for a time, was chained to the high altar of the cathedral, measuring no less than sixteen inches long by four broad. There is also a house near Burntisland called Ross-end. Now, this cannot be applied to Fife being on the end of it, as a promontory, but to some local promontory on the end of which it is built, as its name imports.

FINIS.



## APPENDIX.

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### Page 43. I.

I cannot forbear to mention here, also, a singular circumstance I had from the landlord and landlady, both yet alive,—viz. that before parking or inclosing took place, they were accustomed to have folds built of feal or turf for the cattle lying in at night; but that, when the folds happened to be in this place where the dead had been burnt, the cattle would never lie in them, but always broke through or leaped over the dyke; that they were obliged to give a man a boll of barley extra to watch them, when they lay in this spot, which was obliged to be repeated every four or five years in rotation; but that sometimes the man was not able to keep them in by all his endeavours, the cattle looking wild and terrified in appearance; and sometimes it required the united efforts of all the hands that could be had to keep them in, oftentimes springing over the fold dykes close beside

them, and frequently crouching and trembling as if they would have fallen down with terror, although nothing appeared visible to the visual organs either of the man or those that occasionally assisted him. However, after the discovery of so many ashes and fragments of human bones, the man declared that, had he known of these being so near, he would not have been so fond of watching.

The late farmer of Upper Orquart, a most respectable man, with whom I was well acquainted, and upon whose farm the principal part of the battle was fought, told me also that always when the folds happened to be both at where the Caledonians were burnt as well as the Romans—but particularly he specified the spot where the Romans had been burnt, or the Witch Know or Knoll—the cattle would never lie in the fold, but were always breaking “the fauld,” as he called it, except when they were particularly watched; and even that was not always effectual for keeping them from doing it either. This would insinuate as if the spirits of these departed heroes of antiquity sometimes visited and hovered about the places where their ashes had been deposited; though invisible to the more refined visual organs of the human eye, yet obviously visible in some shape or other to the more gross visual organs of the irrational or bestial tribe, else how can these fore-mentioned occurrences be accounted for? This hypothesis seems to be borne out by Balaam’s Ass

perceiving the Angel twice, when he himself could not do so till his eyes were supernaturally opened.

Page 105, A.

There is a rock called the Bore Rock or Craig, about 200 yards to the south west of this, that had a perpendicular front to the north, full of perforations, all obviously artificial, and about the same calibre, sufficient to let in a man's hand and arm, but of unequal depth, some being nearly a yard deep, some three-fourths, and others half a yard. They consisted originally of about two dozen, but now, unfortunately, of only about nine or ten, the rest having been lately taken down towards the top by a neighbouring proprietor, for the sake of the stones for inclosing. I suppose these either to have had some allusion to the idolatrous worship of the Gods, or for playing at some game of chance, for the purpose of secreting something in them; and making people find it out by guessing, &c.

Page 89, C.

Oliver Cromwell is said to have lain with his army for some time about the village of Balgedie, on the east end of Loch Leven. It appears that his army had at that time been rather unruly, or not in a proper state of subordination, and had required many severe examples to be exhibited before they were properly reduced. The Gallows-

know, or Gallowhill, lies contiguous to the place in which there are said to have been several executions at the time he lay there. There is an anecdote still mentioned of him, which shews him to have been a rigid disciplinarian, and in which he administered summary justice on one of his soldiers, who is said to have been in the practice of going to a woman who had a cow, and forcibly taking the milk from her after she had milked the cow, and drinking it. The woman, it seems, had suffered for a time patiently ; but one day, immediately after he had done it, she followed him, and preferred a serious complaint at head-quarters. Cromwell asked her if she was sure that it was one of his men that did so ; the woman answered that she was perfectly sure of that ; and that he had just been guilty of doing it ; and that she had followed him immediately afterwards. Cromwell asked her if she would know the man who had done it ; she answered in the affirmative. He then made his men form in line, and desired her to fix upon the guilty man ; she was not long in doing this, it appears, as the man's face had by this time become pretty familiar to her. Cromwell again asked her if she was sure that was the person ; she declared that she was perfectly sure of it. He again reminded her that she would need to be perfectly certain of it, because, if she caused an innocent man to suffer, her life should be the forfeit. He then called the man out of the ranks, and made him be instantly shot, (some say that he was hanged) and his body to be opened,



which was immediately done, and the milk was found curdled in his stomach. This was proof sufficient of his guilt ; and, at the same time, it saved the woman, who, I dare say, by that time would be repenting heartily that she had carried the matter so far, not imagining at the time that it would have been attended with so serious and fatal consequences.

Another curious anecdote is told of Cromwell when lying about Perth, when one of the principal contractors for his army, of the name of Monday or Mundy, by his affairs becoming embarrassed, had committed the rash act of suicide by hanging himself. Cromwell, it seems, had offered a premium to any one that would make the most appropriate lines of poetry on the occasion, however short or sententious. Many elaborate poetical essays, it is said, were given in by the various competitors on the subject ; but, amongst others, a tailor, who lived at Kinfauns, is said to have started as a competitor ; but, unfortunately, his wife, when she understood that he was one, and learned also that he was about to set out for the trial, thought it so ridiculous in him to appear, that she locked up his clothes, and would not allow him a clean shirt to appear decent in. However, it seems the tailor had either found means to procure a clean shirt, or had gone wanting one, and delivered in his essay with the rest, consisting only of four simple lines, but which is said to have carried off the prize :

“ Bless'd be the Sunday,  
“ Cursed be wordly pelf ;  
“ Tuesday now begins the week,  
“ For Monday has hang'd himself.”

This shews that Oliver, with all his apparent morosity, had not been insensible to humour.

Page 83, C.

There is still in the policies of Edenshead a camp of a longitudinal form ; and though it differs from the usual form of the Roman camps, yet it appears to have been made by them at this time. It is of an oblong square, about 375 feet long, by about forty broad at an average. All those who have seen it of late, since the discoveries recently made in the vicinity, agree in acknowledging it to be unquestionably a Roman camp, as sometimes their camps were of this figure ; and the camps of the Caledonians were generally, if not always, of a roundish, and often of an irregular form. It strikes me that this one had been made that very night after the battle of Meralsford : as it is about 400 yards west from where the battle terminated ; and, as a farther corroboration of this, it appears to have been made in haste, and probably in the dark, as the south half is about seven or eight feet wider than the north half, and appears to have been made by two different parties, each beginning at one end, and meeting in the middle. It consists of strong ramparts of earth, raised up as a vallum,

without any fosse, except on the east side, which is now a good deal filled up. The ramparts generally stand about four feet high, and in some parts three yards thick, and slope also three yards, which shew them to have been very strong originally. Unfortunately, however, the south end was thrown down and levelled some years ago; but the earth of it still points out itself, and the old road going past the north end had, through time, encroached upon it after the roads began to be widened, and the dyke on the edge of the planting had taken up the greater part of it. As it is by its size calculated for containing one legion only, and as the ninth legion was the weakest, it is highly probable that this legion had occupied it, as it did one at Lochore, at a considerable distance from the rest, when it was attacked by the Caledonians, and had to procure the assistance of the others. I am the more confirmed in this, from seeing a map of Ptolemy of this part of the country sometime ago, which, though not very accurately laid down, must obviously refer to this one, as it has a camp marked out upon it near about this part of the country.

Since seeing Tacitus's account, I am satisfied that this is the very camp that he alludes to. He says that the legionary soldiers were placed before the vallum; now, this exactly coincides with this narrow camp, and points out that some of the soldiers, at least, belonging to the legions, had been

stationed there. By a little observation, the main camp will appear to have extended towards the east, comprehending Edenshead House, garden, orchard, and part of the policies, in all about two and a half acres ; and, though now much defaced, yet distinct vestiges of it evidently appear in three different places. A strong rampart about five feet high, and two or three feet higher than the other side of the road, running along the south side of the old road on the north for about seventy-four yards, then receding a little from the road eighteen yards, then running into the back wall of the garden for other fifty yards, and appearing again at the north-east corner, is plainly visible. It had been levelled on the top, and an entry made into the house, part of it being faced up by a sunk fence towards the south east angle. It also visibly appears emerging from the south end of the narrow camp for about eight or ten yards, running east before the house, directly towards the root of a large tree, one of the most antient, large and beautiful trees, to be found in all North Britain. It plainly appears to have been planted in the vallum or rampart, as its roots stand above three feet higher than the corner of the house and level of the ground around it ; and, when the green was levelled and a little enlarged, the roots of the tree had to be covered with new earth. There is an artificial mound, with a stone in the centre, behind Edenshead orchard, about 3 feet high, 20 feet long by 16 broad, and commanding the best view of all the camp ; and this

obviously appears to have been the Prætorium, as the rampart or *vallum* opposite is above six feet high. Than this a more excellent or appropriate situation could scarcely any where be found for a camp, having three sides defended by nature, the vallum running originally along the top of a steep bank that shelves down to the Eden on the south, and along the top of a sloping bank on the east, towards that small stream called the Moreton Burn in old papers ; the hollow in which it runs, being called the Chapel Den and Chapel Well, would intimate as much as if there had once been an old catholic chapel thereabout, though no vestige of this now remains. The ancient name of the village accords with this, called in old papers the Chapelton of the Virgin, changing its name at the Reformation. The camp also having plenty of water close by it, on two sides, and an excellent spring well of fine cold water near the north corner of it, rendered it in every respect a most eligible situation. Close by this, some Roman urns were dug up a few years ago. The road also cut through a gentle slope on the north side, plainly points out the west side as the face or fore-front of it, and confirms the account given by Tacitus, that this is really the place where the battle was fought, and the camp occupied by Agricola after it, which he attempts to describe. Mr Gordon and those who think that this battle was fought at Dalgin-ross, near Comrie, as also those who suppose it to have been at Fortengal,

find nothing but a bare Roman camp to confirm their hypothesis; but barely finding a Roman camp will never, without other concomitant evidences, prove a Roman battle. But happily we have every thing requisite to prove, in the most incontestible manner, the truth of our hypothesis of this being the very site of the battle, so long and so anxiously sought for; and that this must consequently be the very camp referred to, and laid down by Ptolomy in his map formerly alluded to.

Page 91, CC.

Another Roman coin was found in one of the inclosures of Ledin Orquhart, in March last, but was thoughtlessly given by the man who found it to one of his children, by which means it was lost before it was sufficiently ascertained to what emperor it had belonged. It was said to differ from the coin of Domitian already found. The circumstance of Roman coins being found on these grounds seems to confirm the account given by the best informed, that the farm of Ledin Orquhart anciently belonged to the Orquharts as their out-field, as the name also imports. It is highly probable that all the four Orquharts had originally belonged to the Oreams, and had been cultivated by them, and that Ledin Orquhart had been also cultivated by them. This conjecture is still further confirmed by the Roman coins being found in these lands. The produce of these farms had been

brought over by Meralsford to Orea, as there is an ancient road leading into the town of Orea, from the ford, through the muir or heath below.

A gentleman in the neighbourhood had been a little sceptical at first respecting Orea being a Roman town, or the evidences adduced being sufficient to establish the truth of it, until he went over and viewed it; and then he got ocular demonstration, by seeing all the foundations of the houses so distinctly by themselves, in three rows, with the ridges or streets raised above the rest of the ground that had been causewayed, with the ramparts of earth to keep off the wet or rain from the hill, &c. with the table cut out of the freestone rock, &c. and then he confessed that his doubts were all removed. The word Ledin, though an old word, is still in use. When the produce of a field is carried into the barn or stack-yard, it is usually said to be led or ledin; so that the produce of the Ledin Orquhart had been led in, or carried over to Orea by the foresaid road by wheel carriages, as the road where visible is about the breadth of a cart tract. There was also a small square building resembling a fold for putting cattle in, built of stone, obviously of great antiquity, and connected with Orea, being a little below it in the heath; but unfortunately the stones were also, like all the rest, taken away by a man of the name of Hutton, in Upper Orquhart, about 40 or 50 years ago, but the foundations are still visible.

## Page 154, F.

This experiment was made on the 10th May 1821, in presence of the Reverend Mr Laurie, Doctor Guthrie, and the writer hereof. The Reverend Mr Duncan was from home ; but at last his place was supplied by his brother and another young gentleman. Fortunately the dust and rubbish, which we were afraid had filled it up so much, was all at one corner, having fallen down through the hollow or opening in the side of the flooring that leads down to what is called the pit. The sexton who was employed had not dug four feet down, when he came to plenty of human bones, and the fragments of a light green urn, with a row of carving round the bottom of the neck. Most of the bones appeared to have belonged to the person that had been last interred, as they came up double, and of the same size,—the arm bones, the thigh bones, the leg bones, and the ribs on both sides, as also part of the skull and back bones, all in apparent good state of preservation. There was one bone, however, which was dug up among the rest, that obviously appeared to us all not to belong to the human body, which the Doctor declared to be rather the bone of a dog, (the thigh bone). This is apt to make us believe that they had buried their favourite dogs along with their kings, their masters, or in their cemetery ;



and is corroborative of what Buchanan mentions,  
“ That the Scots King, Crathilinth, in the third  
“ century, took some of the gallant Pictish youths  
“ into his favour and familiarity, but who soon  
“ abused that confidence, and were guilty of a very  
“ gallant like action, in stealing a favourite dog that  
“ the King took great delight in ; and that the keeper  
“ was killed in endeavouring to recover it from the  
“ place of its concealment. This naturally stirred up  
“ the resentment of the Scots, and raised a great fer-  
“ ment ; and a multitude of both sides collecting, a  
“ sharp combat was maintained, in which many on  
“ both sides were slain, among which not a few of the  
“ young nobility of each nation. This, instead of  
“ allaying, rather tended to stir up their mutual ran-  
“ cour and revenge, and was the means of sowing the  
“ seeds of a cruel and exterminating war ; for, from  
“ that day forward, each nation infested the other  
“ with hostile incursions, and never gave over till  
“ they met together with complete armies. Neither  
“ could peace be made up between them, though  
“ both Kings desired it. And unless Carausius, a  
“ Roman who was Dioclesian’s deputy in Belgic Ar-  
“ morica, had interposed, they had fought it out to  
“ the last man, till both nations had been destroyed.”  
What then if this very bone should have belonged  
to this very distinguished dog ? But sure I am the  
bones of no dog whatever ever deserved such distinc-  
tion, far less the bones of that one ; which, though  
no moral guilt could be attached to him, was yet  
the incidental and unhappy occasion of so much

mischief and bloodshed. The man in digging soon came to thin broad flags, which either served as the bottom of the first coffin or the cover of another; and, by removing one which seemed the largest, found that there were plenty of bones below; and thus, after gaining our end in ascertaining the original design of building it as a cemetry for the Royal Family, we desisted. After having made this important discovery within, we then went out, and soon made another one without. When looking up to it, we observed that the first twelve rows of stones from the foundation were exceedingly weather-beaten, old, and corroded by the effect of time, though seemingly of a hard and durable nature. The contrast was so great with those immediately above them, that these appeared to be only as if they had been newly built, in comparison with the others. This contrast appears to best advantage from the west side of it, or from the road that goes past it.

The sexton informed me lately that he has since dug a little farther down, and come upon other bones of the human body, and seven other human skulls all lying together, all of them full grown male skulls, as he can easily discern betwixt a male and female skull by the opening in it. One of the skulls he says was uncommonly black and dark, as he had never seen the like of it before; and one of the bodies he is sure had been embalmed, as the dry flesh was adhering to several of the bones. The uncommon dryness of the mould in which it has

been so long inhumed is undoubtedly the cause of this.

I understand Sir Walter Scott has very lately been paying a visit to this round tower, and has got away the most entire skull, but not surely without leaving an equivalent in value to the sexton, as the shewing it to visitors was a considerable source of emolument to the poor man.

It is quite obvious to me that these twelve rows of stones had been all that had been originally built and designed as the mausoleum for burying the Kings in, as early as their Kings had their residence at Abernethy,—which was from the beginning of their kingdom, several hundred years before the Christian aera,—and had been originally open at the top, without a door; as plainly appears by the stones at the door sides being similar to those of the rest above the twelve original rows, and to be coeval with the old church that was lately taken down, or even a little later. When bells began to be used after the introduction of Christianity, the addition had been made to it for suspending a bell in; and then the door had been made, to which a clock was added, after the invention of clocks and watches. It had thus served three purposes, *1st*, As a mausoleum for their Kings. *2d*, As a belfrey to their church. *3d*, A town clock. And the bell still continues to ring twice a day summer and winter, and has done so from time immemorial. The only other one of the kind in North Britain is at Brechin; and if the same experiment were made there, I have no

doubt of the same results both internally and externally. If so, we must necessarily infer that Brechin had occasionally been one of the royal residences, being also in the Pictish dominions, and that the beautiful and commanding situation of the Castle of Brechin, the seat of the Honourable Mr Maule of Panmure, had been the site of the palace.

Page 136, E.

*Pittendriech*.—This word in both its parts is still frequently used. *Pitten* means putting to, or adding to any thing; and the word *driech* is employed to denote any difficult or laborious piece of work. Thus, when the Romans had been obliged to deviate from the strait road, in their march, at *Pittendriech*, and to turn nearly at right angles to the right hand, the natives would say, “The road is rendered more *driech*,” or “They have got a more *driech* piece of road *pitten* to them.”

Page 139, G.

*Maaz, or Dog of Maaz*.—A very extraordinary occurrence, but seemingly well authenticated, is said to have taken place at this town about the beginning of last century, by which a murder was discovered, after it had been perpetrated more than twenty years, and deserves to be better known, when the shocking crime of murder is become so frequent in our day.

A man, who is said to have resided here, was haunted day and night with the appearance of a dog staring at him, which was only visible to him, and invisible to every other person; for he would have said frequently to those that were with him, ‘Do you not see that dog staring at me?’ pointing to the place. They always answered that they could not see it. He was so harassed and haunted with it, that he took the resolution of bringing the case before the presbytery, in order to ask advice what he should do, whether he should speak to it or not. After deliberating upon it for some time, the presbytery came to the decision that he should not, and desired him not to do it, unless he was still more haunted by it. Afterwards, however, it still continued to appear to him; and at length he summoned up the resolution to speak to it. He asked it why it appeared to him, and not to others, in that shape? It immediately replied, that the reason was, because a murder was committed by means of a dog when he (the man) was a child in the cradle: That the spirit or apparition, who then appeared to him in the shape of the dog, was, when living in the body, his uncle, who then was living with an old man, his father, and he (the man) his grandson, being then a child: That a man, who is said to be a chapman or pedlar, had one day called at that place, asking the nearest way across the river Erecht to Glammis Fair; and that this uncle had gone, along with a dog, to shew the pedlar the way. The temptation had been so irresistibly

strong, that, by killing the man, he would get the contents of his pack, that he set the dog upon him, which soon destroyed the man ; and then, dragging his corps a little into the wood, dug a deep pit, and threw them into it. It informed him also, that the pedlar soon came to be amissing—that he was traced till he came to this—that he came to be suspected, and was closely interrogated ; but, thinking to lay the blame upon the dog, he declared that he was as innocent as the child in the cradle, who was the man to whom he now appeared. It further told him that his soul was consigned to the state of the damned ; and added, “ You will not, perhaps, be very fond of going into the woods with me alone, though, assuredly, I shall do you no harm. However, I shall make a mark (some say it was to be the shape or print of a dog’s foot) over the spot, by which you will know where the bones are.” Accordingly, it is said, a great number of people of the parish of Blair went along with the man in search of the bones ; but, it seems, they never found that mark ; for the first day they found nothing. The dog, or rather apparition, appeared again, and told the man that it would raise over the spot what is called a rickle or a small cairn of stones, about a dozen or so, and to dig deep, and there he would find the bones, and inter them ; “ and I shall never trouble you more.” It is said that most part of the parish of Blairgowrie went out the second day, and soon found the bones by the second mark ;

and it is added that all the parish of Blairgowrie that were able to attend were at the interment of the bones in the church-yard of Blairgowrie. I had heard a very judicious and respectable clergyman tell the anecdote about thirty years ago ; and, I believe, before his mother, who was a young girl about eight or nine years old when she heard her father, who was then minister in Kingoldrum in Angus, give the account that night after he returned from the presbytery, of the man being before them that day asking advice in the extraordinary case, she affecting to be asleep in order that she might hear her father tell it with the greater freedom. This old lady died only about eight or nine years ago, and lived near to ninety years. Happening to be in that country soon after I first heard it, I made enquiry farther about it. The people there in general seemed to be quite full of it ; and mentioned some old men, then living, that were at the interment of the bones, and also pointed out the spot where they were interred. The only difference, indeed, in the telling of it, is, the one account mentioned that it was a drover, the other that it was a chapman or pedlar, that was murdered ; but it is not very material, as it obviously had been booty or money that had been the sole motive for perpetrating it. Thus I have given it as I heard it, without either adding to, or detracting from it.

There is something observable about this old lady referred to, who died lately, in her con-

nexion with clergymen. She had one for her father, and one for her grandfather; she had a clergyman for her brother and also one for her brother-in-law; she had one for her husband, and one for her son, and another for her son-in-law, and also one for her nephew, and another for her grand-nephew, which two last are still alive, all eminent clergymen in their day; and yet she was no better than John Wesley's pretended perfectionists after all.

*Alex. Smith, a student to the University.*









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